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Woman's Weekly

14 March 2023

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FLATTER TUMMY

Whatever your age!

Maureen Lipman

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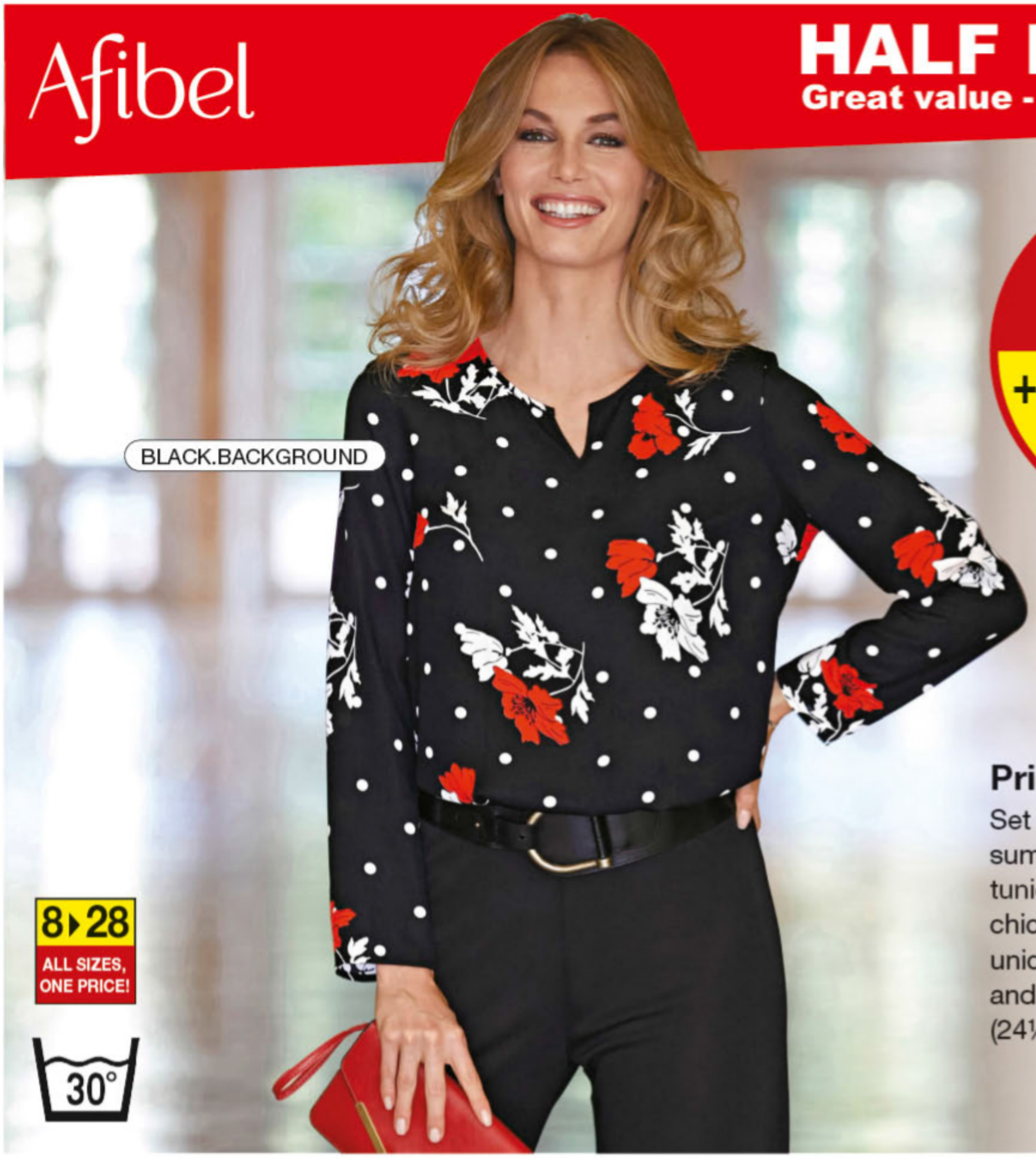

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Hello!

Sunny days from long ago

One of the first childhood holidays I really remember was to Cornwall; we drove down from eastern England, which in those days was a real adventure – even dual carriageways were a rarity then. We stayed at a rundown old cottage in the fishing village of Newlyn and explored the sun-drenched coast, discovering a myriad of pretty cliffs and coves, before coming across what we thought was the perfect beach, at Porthcurno. Only later, leaving the sands and exploring up its adjacent cliffs with the dog, did we stumble into something even more magical, carved out of the rock. It was The Minack Theatre – see page 10.

Geoff Editor

geoffrey.palmer@futurenet.com

COVER PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK. PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE: GETTY, PHILIP SOWELS. *T&CS APPLY. UK ONLY

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3 of the best... kettles

BOLD CHOICE

For the style conscious, this will make a statement on your kitchen counter. Churchgate in Matte Black, **£50**, Dunelm

TECH WONDER

A digital temperature dial gives you control to heat your water from 40-100C. Haden Dorchester in Sage Green, **£70**, George Home

BUDGET BUY

Get a luxe look for less with this chic honeycomb-inspired design. Russell Hobbs in Grey and Rose Gold, **£30**, B&M

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PAY LESS THAN IN THE SHOPS!

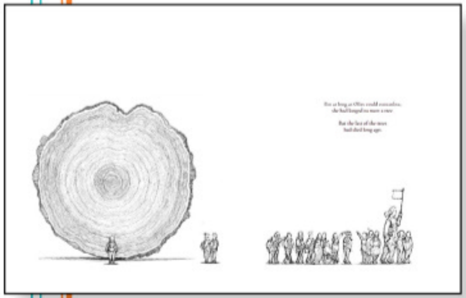
Good to SHARE

Foxy and bath-time tales, and dolphins on the move

From us to you

Wildlife watching at the seaside

Playful bottlenose dolphins are now present throughout the year off the coast of Yorkshire. These marine mammals were once only seen during the summer months, but in recent years, a pod of 15 dolphins made a splash when sighted in December heading towards Whitby. It's thought that they are drawn to these waters by shoals of mackerel, sea bass, salmon and trout along the shore and in the River Esk. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust is carefully monitoring dolphin populations. Visit ywt.org.uk



INSPIRING AND MOVING

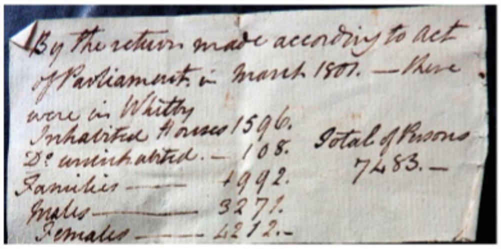
What would the planet be like if trees were a distant memory? *The Last Tree: A Seed of Hope* by Luke Adam Hawker (£16.99, HB, Octopus) tells the story of Olive, a young girl living in a post-nature future, where trees are only seen in a museum. Can her bravery and imagination sow seeds of new life in her world? A beautifully illustrated, heart-warming fable about the power of nature.

DID YOU KNOW?

On the £5 banknote, Sir Winston Churchill looks rather grumpy because photographer Yousuf Karsh had taken away his cigar moments before snapping the shot. Churchill ignored polite requests to put it out, so Karsh removed it himself – hence the particularly unimpressed expression in the famous portrait.

On this day in history

Amid fears of food shortages, Britain undertook the first official census on 10 March 1801. To get an idea of the size of the population, officials knocked on doors to ask about the number of people, occupations, marriages and burials in each household. Not including those in prison or the military, the population of England and Wales stood at just 8.9 million.



By the return made according to Act of Parliament in March 1801. — There were in Whitby
Inhabited Houses 1596.
Do uninhabited. — 108.
Families — — 1992.
Males — — 3271.
Females — — 4212.—
Total of Persons 7483.—

WORDS: ANNABEL KEMP. PHOTOS: ALAMY, ELLIE KURTTZ, GETTY, HARRY HOGG, RICHARD H SMITH

Fairy-tale forest

Be whisked away to an enchanted wood with Opera North's magical production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Set to folk-inspired melodies, daring young fox cub Sharp Ears encounters plucky hens, darting dragonflies and mischievous squirrels on her journey. The UK tour reaches Newcastle's Theatre Royal on 21 March, with tickets from £20. Book at operanorth.co.uk

GOOD CLEAN FUN

Ideal for under-fives, a fun stage adaptation of *The Flying Bath*, at the Little Angel Studios in London, brings Julia Donaldson and David Roberts' storybook to life. Packed with catchy songs, fun-loving toys and bath-time adventures, the show is on until 23 April, with tickets from £12 at littleangeltheatre.com

Crease is the word

Find moments of peace with the art of paper folding. *Fold it Calm* by Li Kim Goh (£14.99, PB, Ebury Press) is an easy-to-follow guide featuring 25 projects (origami paper included), to help quiet your mind. The perfect gift for Mother's Day.

fold it calm

Money-saving tip

Smaller convenience stores, such as Tesco Express and Sainsbury's Local, often hike up their prices compared to their bigger supermarkets. Studies show that rather than shopping at Sainsbury's Local, you could make savings of up to 9.5% on the same groceries by making a trip to their larger counterpart.

Nature notes

From Louise Midgley

Today's walk, along the towpath of a meandering river in a country park nearby, afforded spectacular views of the adjoining landscape.

There were carpets of cheery, butter-yellow daffodils, and drifts of snowdrops, which continue to provide a jaw-dropping display. Best of all, great swathes of wild garlic, which have greened up the muddy riverbanks that flooded in winter, have restored some beauty and order to the area. But the highlight was spotting a kingfisher repeatedly dive from a low branch into the water to catch his lunch. Such an observation is rare for me, so all the more profound.

My garden week

As they finish flowering, I deadhead my daffodils to stop them setting seed, but I leave the foliage to return nutrients to the bulbs.

Good to SHARE

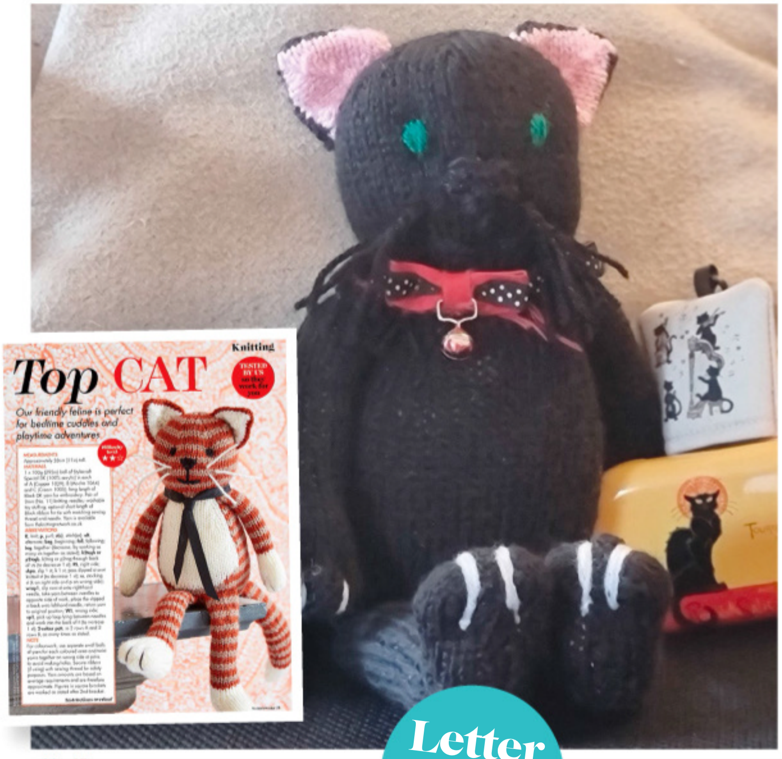
We love to hear what you've been up to, so do get in touch!

From you to us

Paws for thought

This is a picture of my cat Sooty, on the little hut she likes to sit in.
Sally Boakes, Deal

✣ Got a pet pic that makes you smile? We can give it a good home


Knitting
Top CAT
Our friendly feline is perfect for bedtime cuddles and playtime adventures

Letter of the week

FAMILIAR FELINE

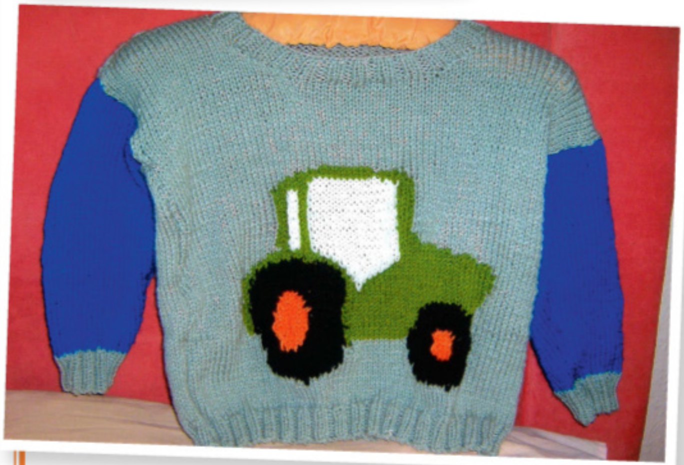
I have a black cat who is called Claudius. I used to do a lot of knitting, but as I now have MS, those days are far behind. When I saw the knitting pattern of the ginger cat in your publication [14 June 2022 issue], my friend Jane came along and found someone to help make it for me. We changed the colours so he would look just like my cat Claude!
June Turnbull, by email

Ode to variety

I have been writing silly rhymes for family and friends. Here's one for you:

Woman's Weekly, Woman's Weekly,
how I love my weekly treat
With stories, recipes, the best puzzle pages,
it can't be beat!
So settle in a comfy chair and plan which
cake to bake
Or maybe a knit or a wonderful craft to make
They are all packed into this weekly magazine
With so much inside each week,
it just has to be seen.

J Barrs, Kingsteignton, Devon



Look what I made

Here is the jumper I knitted for my youngest grandson, Finlay. He lives in a rural area and likes to see tractors out and about. I hope you like it!
Elaine Noble, Derby

Get in touch

WE LOVE LETTERS
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WHAT YOU'RE WEARING COMPILED BY: ANNE HARTNETT

This week

What you're WEARING

SIOBHAN BESLEY, 67

Tell us about your look

It's usually quite colourful! I think it's so important to dress in vibrant shades rather than just fade into the background. My coat is by Uterqüe, the jumper is from Zara (with a bright print Zara shirt underneath) and the cord trousers are by Massimo Dutti. My bag is Whistles, the trainers from an independent store, and my scarf is Hermès – snapped up in the sale.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

Rising to challenges.

CAROLYN RONDEL, 65

Tell us about your look

I like lots of different looks so you could say it's quite eclectic. Today, I've gone for this check jacket from M&S worn over a pinstripe shirt from Zara and a black knit sleeveless vest. My faux-leather trousers are also Zara, with chunky boots by Grenson and a bag by Markberg. I live in Jersey, so I do a quite a lot of shopping online.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

My sense of humour!

MARTA GELENCSER, 49

Tell us about your look

My cardigan/coat is a recent buy from TK Maxx – I was browsing and the colour caught my eye. It's the perfect transition piece from winter to spring. The floral blouse came from a local boutique and my navy jeans are DKNY. Both my bag and boots are internet buys – I do a lot of shopping online. When the weather warms up, I'll be wearing off-the-shoulder tops and dresses – my favourite style.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

My eyes.

ABI CHAN, 30

Tell us about your look

Simple, modern classics are very much my look. I like to buy clothes that last and will easily go with everything else in my wardrobe. My coat is from M&S – you can't beat them for quality and price. My camel jumper is & Other Stories, the jeans were from Topshop and the trainers are by Veja.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

I'm hard-working.

You Wore It Well

Davina Newman, 1966

Here I am on my wedding day, in a lace sheath dress that was very much the fashion in the 1960s. It had a straight, slim skirt with an empire-line top and a long train. The style was quite simple but very chic. I wore it with 4in-high white stilettos. Back in the 1940s, I was a pin-up baby in *Woman's Weekly*, so the magazine has always been part of my life!

+ We'd love to see how great you looked in any era up to and including the 1980s. Please send a good-quality photo with your name, address and daytime phone number clearly written on the back, to: Fashion Dept, *Woman's Weekly*, Future plc, 121-141 Westbourne Terrace, London W2 6JR. Photos will be returned.

My friends and I are like the GOLDEN GIRLS

Dame Maureen Lipman on the humour and the sadnesses that come with growing older

With late partner Guido, and (right) children Adam and Amy

For the past five years, Dame Maureen Lipman has been walking the cobbles as Corrie's waspish Evelyn Plummer. The actor, 76, says it 'astounds' her that it's been that long already – but she has no plans to leave. 'I really admire Evelyn,' she explains. 'She is malevolent. She's grumpy and slightly salt of the earth – she's a proper *Coronation Street* character, an old-fashioned matriarch. So for me, it's a joy to come to work. I've been in London for 55 years and I've enjoyed coming home.'

Dame Maureen does certainly seem to enjoy putting some roots back down in the north. The star grew up in Hull, but moved down south to study at LAMDA before meeting her late husband, playwright Jack Rosenthal, who she married in 1974. As well as raising their two children – Amy and Adam, who are both writers for stage and screen – Maureen has enjoyed a successful stage and screen career. She starred in Oscar-winning film *The Pianist*, and tickled television audiences in comedies such as *Agony* and *Plebs*. But these days, there's something that gives her more pleasure than any acting accolade – her grandchildren.

She says of her son Adam's two kids, Ava and Sacha, 'To them, I'm just Momo. If Ava rings me, as she did last week, to tell me that she's designing a dress for Auntie Amy, I could not be more proud that she's chosen me to ring to ask what I think. No award could be better than that. I'm very touched and overwhelmed by how much I love them.'

A perfect day spent with her grandchildren could be at her Manchester flat, drawing or playing games, or a trip to the theatre. For Maureen, there is only one downside to having grandkids. 'It comes with a tinge of sadness always because I'm looking through my mother's eyes,' Maureen explains, adding, 'I see the qualities of Jack in my children and my grandchildren – that's comforting. Everything that happens to those grandchildren makes a pang in my heart because I think not just about Jack, but my mother and father; wouldn't they have adored these children?!'

Maureen lost Jack to myeloma, a type of blood cancer, in 2004. He was 72, which Maureen now says gives her cause for reflection. She explains, 'He was so young, but I was 58, so in a way I sort of thought he was older. I'm now 76 and I didn't realise that you still feel exactly the same.' In the weeks and months following Jack's death, Maureen says she found comfort in poetry. I couldn't read after Jack,' she explains. I then rediscovered poetry and that helped me. You find out who your friends are, that's for sure. And you try to be a very good thing to other people who've been bereaved.'

It's a sentiment that seems additionally poignant in the light of more recent events, as Maureen lost her long-term partner, Guido Castro, in 2021. 'With both my great loves, I was with them at the very end. That is something that I'm proud of,' she explains, adding, 'Guido was also a lot older than me, so it was no surprise. It's just that he was a very fit man and it was only the last two years, which coincided with COVID.'

Supporting those who have been bereaved, or are dealing with terminal illness, is something the star feels passionate about, and this month, Maureen has been working with Marie Curie to support the charity's Great Daffodil Appeal. 'One in two

Plum roles: With TV grandson Tyrone in Corrie, and (right) in 2002 film *The Pianist*

WORDS: ANNA MATHESON. PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK

The Woman's Weekly interview

'I'm now 76 and I didn't realise that you still feel exactly the same'

of us are affected in some way or another by cancer. So Marie Curie is vital,' Maureen explains, 'There are so many symbols, apps and logos, but there's that little daffodil that pushes its way through the frozen ground every year. It's persistent, strong and reliable – it's very Marie Curie.'

When it comes to her own health, Maureen admits that, like most of us, she fears cancer and dementia. 'I'm fascinated with memory,' she adds. 'I'm fascinated that I can learn – which I'm having to relearn for a play titled *Rose*, which opens at London's Ambassadors Theatre from May – it's 47 pages of dialogue on my own sitting on a bench. But I cannot get out of the house with my key, my lanyard, my purse, and I can't remember who was in that film I watched… I sit there with my friends of the same age and it's like an episode of *The Golden Girls*!'

She does try to keep herself in shape with regular walks and Pilates – although perhaps not as often as her cardiologist might like. 'I'm a lazy sod,' she laughs, 'I eat too much, for a start. But I do try to start the day with a lemon, water and cayenne pepper, and I do stretches.' The one thing she does struggle with, Maureen says, is sleep. 'I'll go to sleep and then wake up at two, at four, and I'll try all sorts. I've got a hypnotherapy tape, pills, everything – but nothing works.'

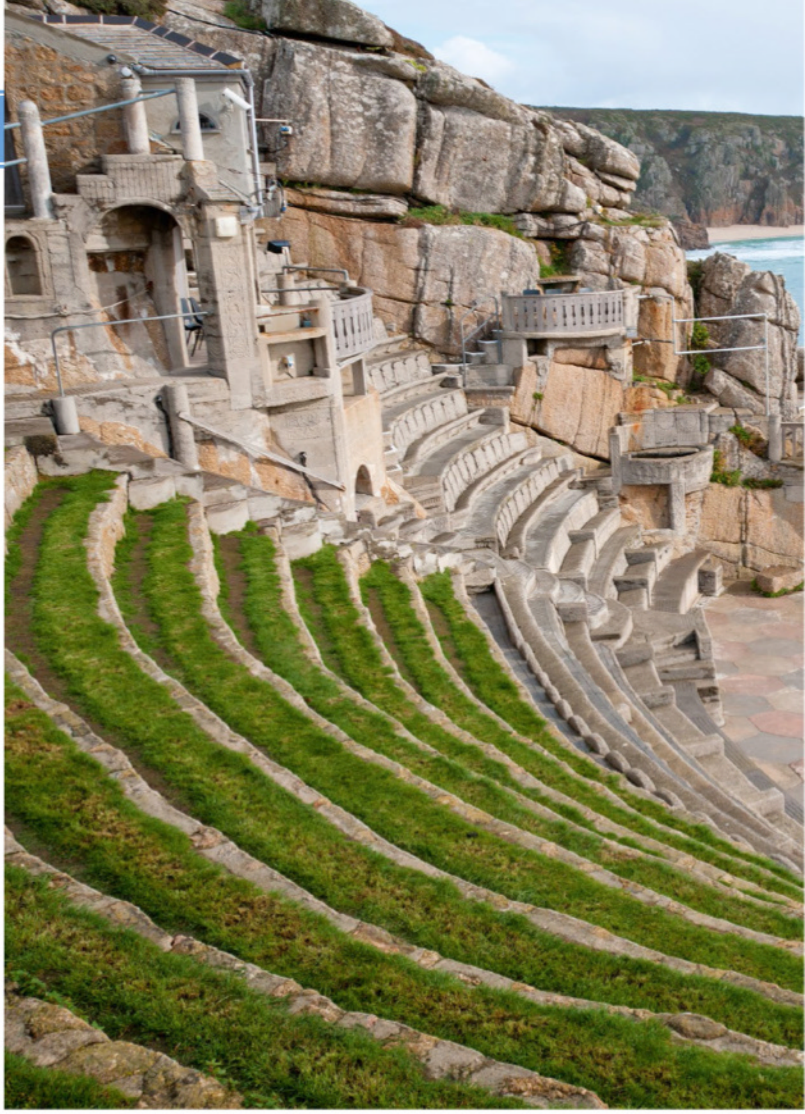
Even so, the star has no plans to retire. 'I will have to be put out like an old horse,' she jokes – but just don't expect her to chase a youthful look. Maureen says of cosmetic surgery, 'I do not wish to have my face pumped full of stuff in order to retain a place on the screen – they can shove that!' Wise words from a Dame.

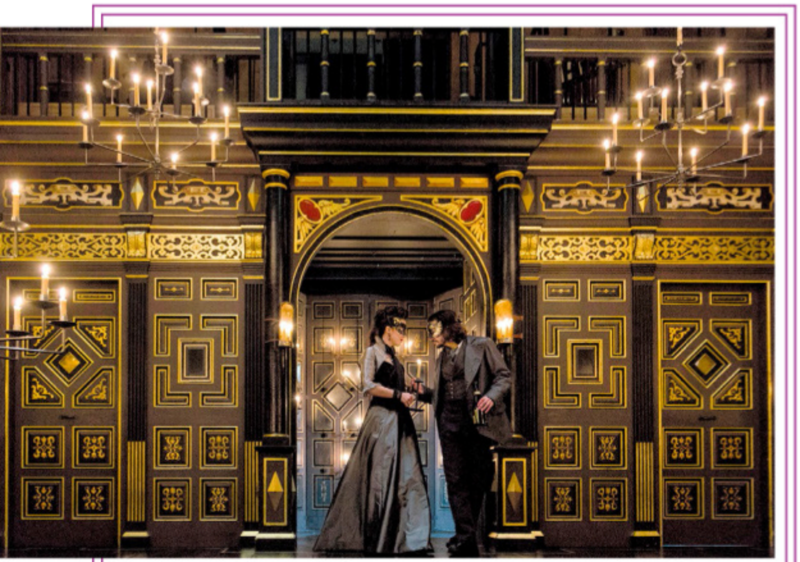
✣ For more on Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal, visit mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil

Celebrating
BRITAIN

DRAMA *with a difference*

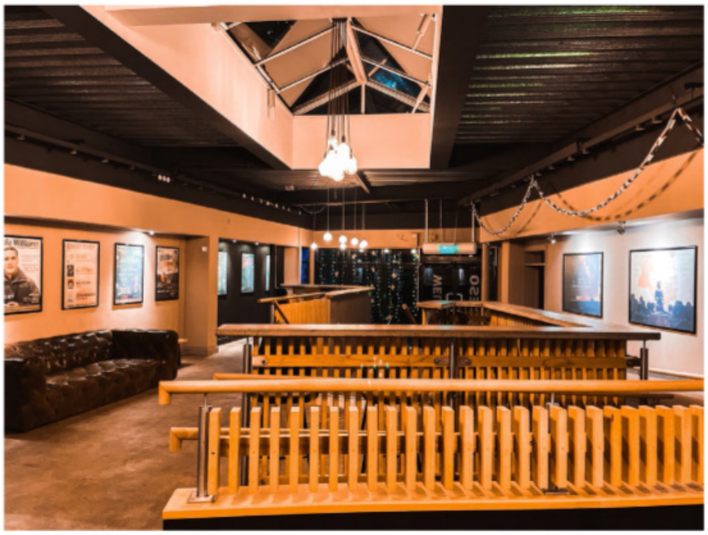
Treat yourself to a ticket at one of these remarkable, quirky theatres





Sam Wanamaker Playhouse **Bankside, London**

The wooden benches might be a little hard, but watching a play at the Sam Wanamaker, Britain's only candlelit theatre, is magical. The indoor theatre is part of Shakespeare's Globe on the banks of the Thames, and is a replica of a 17th century Jacobean playhouse. The intimate 340-seat wooden chamber is built from pale oak and lit by hundreds of beeswax candles and flaming torches, which actors carry on stage to illuminate the action. Performances run from October to April, and this year's include *Titus Andronicus* and *The Winter's Tale*; shakespearesglobe.com



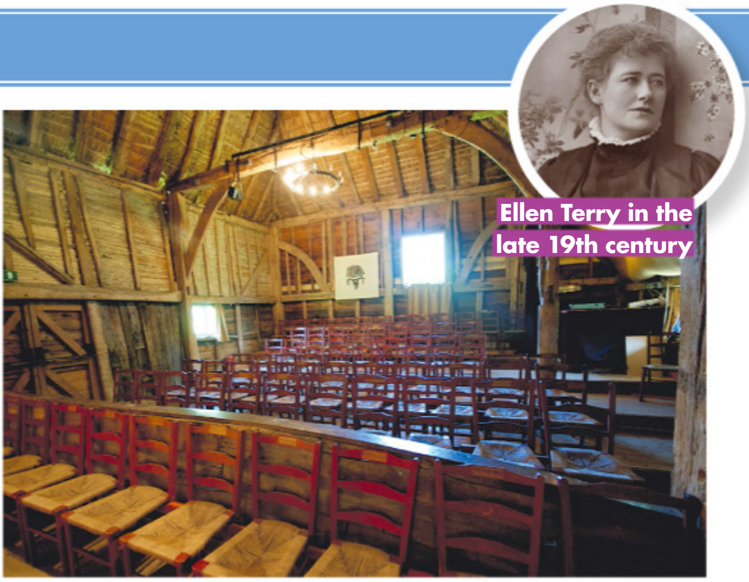
Mwldan **Cardigan, Ceredigion**

Loved by locals for its varied programme of music, theatre, visual arts and film, the Mwldan in Cardigan is a former abattoir that celebrates its 40th birthday as a theatre this year. 'We love that we can produce the unexpected from a tiny town on the west coast of Wales,' says Dilwyn Davies, the theatre's CEO. Established in 1983 by the local amateur dramatic company who converted the building into a community theatre, Mwldan has been renovated to include three auditoria. During the summer it puts on large musical events at Cardigan Castle – Natalie Imbruglia is performing this year; mwldan.co.uk

The Minack

Porthcurno, Cornwall

Performances at this famous theatre come with the added soundtrack of crashing waves, thanks to its spectacular position perched in the cliffs above Porthcurno. 'Wildlife also plays a part,' says executive director Zoë Curnow. 'A cheeky seal may pop his head up, or a pod of dolphins might make a surprise appearance.' The theatre opened in 1929 and was painstakingly built by hand by artist Rowena Cade, who owned a house on the headland. The programme of drama and music runs from March to September, and this year includes *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*; minack.com



Ellen Terry in the late 19th century

Ellen Terry Barn Theatre

Smallhythe, Kent

With just 78 seats, this tiny 17th century theatre is charmingly rustic, with a thatched roof, wooden chairs and ancient beams. Ellen Terry was a leading actress in the late 19th century, and following her death, her daughter Edy turned the barn of her former family home at Smallhythe Place into this unique theatre, where several famous actors have performed, including Sir John Gielgud and Dame Sybil Thorndike. 'It's very atmospheric: you really feel the ghosts of all the actors who have played here,' says director Peter Mould. Productions take place during the summer months – the 2023 programme is yet to be confirmed; etbarntheatre.com

Theatre by the Lake

Keswick, Cumbria

Located on the shores of Derwentwater, this has to be one of the UK's most beautifully located theatres. 'The first thing we do with visiting artists is take them outside to see the magnificent views down the lake,' says the theatre's marketing manager, Rachel Kearns. It started life in the 1940s as a mobile van based in Leicester, which took plays to provincial towns. After visiting Keswick, it took up residence in the car park in the mid 1970s, where it stayed until Lottery funding gave it a permanent home in 1999. It has a busy programme, including its own productions; theatrebythelake.com

Stephen Joseph Theatre **Scarborough**

Britain's very first theatre-in-the-round (where the audience sits in a circle around the stage) opened in Scarborough's public library in 1955, led by the pioneering director Stephen Joseph. It found a permanent home in a disused Odeon Cinema in 1988, where the lovely art deco auditorium still features a central stage. Scarborough-born playwright Sir Alan Ayckbourn was director of the theatre from 1972 to 2009, with 82 of his 88 plays having their premiere here. His 89th production, *Constant Companions,* will make its debut here later this year; sjt.uk.com

WORDS: SALLY ROBINSON. PHOTOS: ALAMY, GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK

Clever tricks for a flatter TUMMY

Regain your waist through your 50s, 60s, 70s and beyond with this tailor-made plan

It's a common but frustrating sign of growing older – the gradual development of that spare tyre around our middles. And it seems shifting it becomes more and more difficult.

But it's good if we can keep it down as much as possible because belly fat doesn't just affect how we feel about ourselves, it has an impact on our health too. Excess abdominal fat is an indication of internal visceral fat. This is the fat that's stored around our major organs, and it has been linked to a host of potential health problems, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease,high blood pressure and stroke.

At any age!

In your 50s

As perimenopause and menopause kick in during your late 40s and early 50s, oestrogen levels start to fall, and fat is redistributed from your hips and thighs to your tummy.

Metabolism also declines with every decade, meaning you need to eat less and exercise more to avoid putting on pounds.

Best flat-tum tactics

✣ Make your heart race

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) is effective because it triggers the release of hormones that, in turn, encourage the body to burn up more calories, explains leading HIIT expert professor Jamie Timmons of Loughborough University. The added bonus is that it hardly takes any time to do. First, warm up, then workout as hard as you can for 60 seconds – this could be on a cycling machine or cross trainer, running, doing jumping jacks or skipping.

Then take one to two minutes of rest and repeat up to five times. Aim to do HIIT three times a week, for around three to 10 minutes each time. Not for you? Running, power walking, cycling or dancing for 30 minutes, five days a week, can also help to reduce tummy fat.

✣ Build strength

A decline in oestrogen can lead to a loss of muscle, but you can help build it back up. Weight or resistance training helps to maintain muscle tone and slows muscle loss. And because muscle is more 'metabolically active' than fat (it burns more calories while at rest), the more muscle you build, the more fat you lose, even when doing nothing.

Two or three 30-minute sessions of weight training a week, focusing on major muscle groups (bum, legs, arms) should do the trick.

In your 60s

Oestrogen levels continue to fall and muscle continues to be lost at a rate of 5% every decade. As this happens very gradually, the change can creep up on us. So unless you cut calories and increase activity, the fat piles on and guess where most of it goes?

Best flat-tum tactics

Pump up the protein

'Eating protein, in conjunction with exercise, can help to preserve muscle mass and keep you fuller for longer,' says British Dietetic Association spokesperson Chloe Miles. Animal-based foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy foods tend to be good sources of complete proteins. Plant-based foods (fruit, veg and nuts) usually lack one or more essential amino acid.

Try these protein-packed food swaps:

Swap Plain yogurt (5g protein/100g)
For Greek yogurt (9g protein/100g)
Swap White rice (2g protein/100g)
For Quinoa (4g protein/100g)
Swap Runner beans (2g protein/100g)
For Peas (5g protein/100g)
Swap Tzatziki (2g protein/100g)
For Houmous (8g protein/100g)

Be 'NEAT'

Apart from scheduled exercise, anything that tots up your total calorie burn is a must right now.

'Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT) refers to the calories you burn through daily activities, and it's surprising how these can add up,' says Chloe.

- 30 minutes of cooking = 64 calories
- 30 minutes of vigorous cleaning = 95 calories
- 30 minutes of walking at a moderate pace = 105 calories
- 30 minutes of gardening = 127 calories

In your 70s+

Decreasing bone density can lead to a very small but gradual loss of height and, quite simply, we have less body length to accommodate tummies. The good news, though, is that oestrogen levels should have stabilised now, but continued loss of muscle can slow metabolism, making it harder to shift stubborn tummy fat.

Best flat-tum tactics

Dose up on dairy

Including dairy as part of a calorie-controlled diet can aid weight loss,' says Chloe. Plus it will protect your bones. Have three low-fat portions a day, such as low-fat Greek yogurt, semi-skimmed milk or cottage cheese.

Build up resistance

In this decade, resistance training is vital to help keep bones strong and counteract muscle loss. You may notice you're reaching for lighter dumb-bells and barbells, but try not to go down too much. Resistance training can improve strength and muscle power. Remember, the more muscle you have, the more fat you burn.

New research

Time-restricted eating and high-intensity interval training may be the perfect combination to blast body fat, according to a new study by scientists in Norway. In research published in the journal *Cell Metabolism*, they found that doing both together (compared with doing one or the other alone) led to a twofold increase in body-fat reduction in overweight women, as well as a decrease in the risky visceral fat stored around the organs. The participants stuck to a 10-hour eating window and did three 30-minute HIIT sessions a week.

PHOTOS (POSED BY MODELS): GETTY

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Woman's Weekly blossoming gifts

It's a funny old world

'I'd missed the last bus home, so I decided to walk the streets until morning'

This week's columnist: Chef Marco Pierre White

"I always put success down to luck; it's being given an opportunity and seizing it with both hands. I was the first British chef to be awarded three Michelin stars when I was 33, yet my journey began when I was only 19 and working at The Box Tree restaurant in my native Yorkshire.

One evening, I wrote to two highly esteemed restaurants and asked if they had any vacancies. The first eatery was the prestigious Le Gavroche in London, who responded with an application form in French. I tried my best to complete it, but my expertise in the language was poor and I ended up throwing it in the bin.

> **'Albert Roux employed me on the spot'**

The other was Chewton Glen. They invited me for an interview, and so I boarded a coach from Leeds, and made the lengthy trek via London. I finally arrived at their premises in New Milton, in Hampshire, and all went well, with the chef offering me a job in pastry.

Boldly, I informed him that I'd have to think about it, as my aim was to always be in the main kitchen.

What happened next was truly remarkable. As I travelled back to Victoria Station, I realised I'd missed the last bus home, so I decided to walk the streets and do some sightseeing until morning. There weren't any smartphones then, which meant I didn't have access to maps, and I kept taking right turns only as I explored the city.

As fate would have it, I found myself on the Chelsea Bridge Road, staring at this smart French restaurant. I couldn't believe my eyes when I looked up at the name above the door and it read Le Gavroche.

I vowed to return at 8am the next day. When I did, I was met by a boy who explained that I'd have to visit their head office if I wanted to speak to someone in charge. He gave me directions and off I went.

When I reached them, I was greeted by proprietor, Albert Roux, who asked me, 'What can I do for you?' I told him my story and shed some light on my employment history. Unbelievably, he must have seen something in me because he employed me on the spot.

Furthermore, I only had £7.36 in my pocket when I returned to the Big Smoke to start my new job a week later. My boss had secured me accommodation, but it was for one week only.

Thankfully, luck kicked in again when I became acquainted with a man called Victor, where I worked. His family lived next door to the B&B I was staying in, and he introduced me to friends of theirs, called Mr and Mrs Gregory. I lived with them for six months. Sadly, they have both passed away, but I'll never forget how kind they were to me all those years ago."

+The 600-seater restaurant, Mr. White's, is now open at 20-21 Leicester Square, London WC2H 7LE; mpwrestaurants.co.uk

'My funny old week'

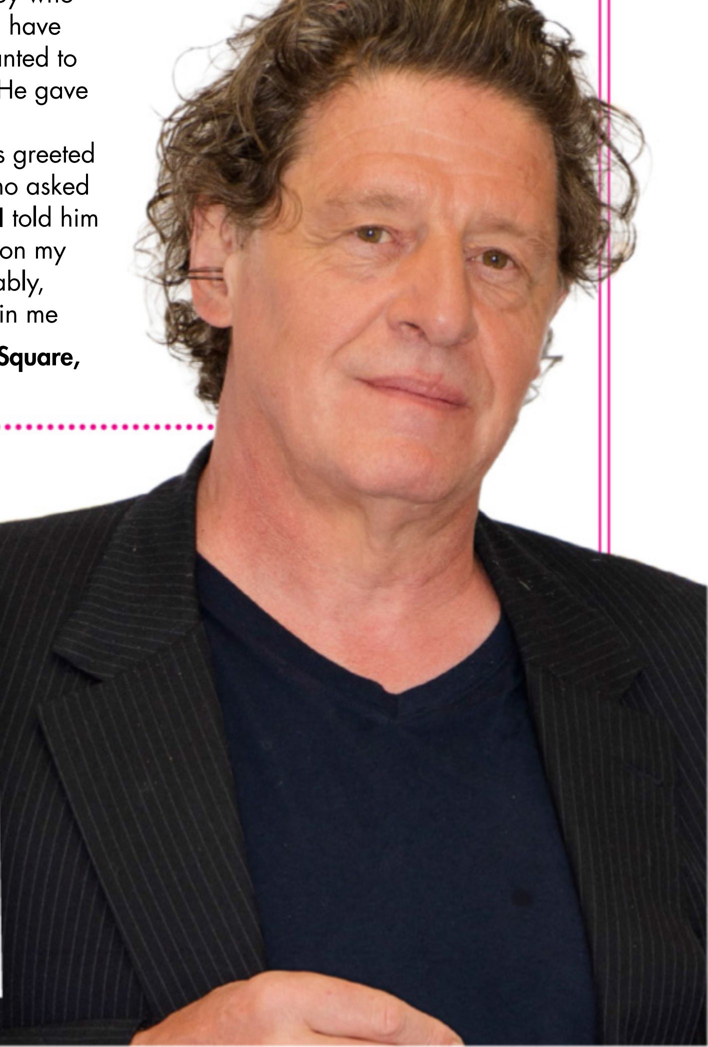
WHERE I'VE BEEN In my garden, which is not your average outdoor space – it's around 20 acres.

WHAT I BOUGHT Two hundred fake trees and several small fish for the two ponds I have. I'm turning my garden into a local nature reserve.

WHO I'VE MET My gardener, who's building me an orchard.

WHAT I'VE SEEN Believe it or not, I don't own a TV – I much prefer to listen to the radio.

Marco's beautiful garden and one of the ponds



WORDS: JULIE ANN TRAINOR. PHOTOS: INSTAGRAM @MARCOPIERREWHIT, SHUTTERSTOCK

Promotion

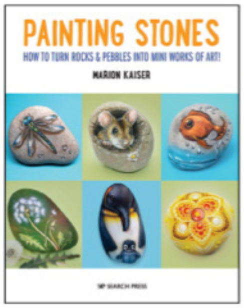
Woman's Weekly Craft Book Club

Save 25% on all these books, plus free postage
(UK only)

Esme Clemo, Craft and Home Editor

Lynne Rowe, Knitting and Crochet Editor

We're both passionate about all sorts of craft, so we have pulled together a selection of fabulous books, which we hope you'll like. We will be bringing you other great offers throughout the year, so look out for them.



Painting Stones by Marion Kaiser
£9.99, Club price £7.49
With 20 fun designs to get you started, all you need is a stone, some acrylic paints, a paintbrush and varnish. You will quickly and easily be creating your very own fabulous stone masterpieces!

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SEW MADDIE
THE ADORABLE RAG DOLL WHO LOVES FUN AND FASHION!

Sew Maddie by Debbie Shore
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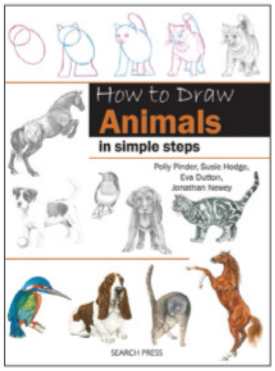
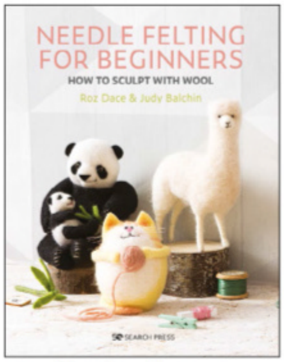
Create this gorgeous heirloom rag doll, her lovely wardrobe and her cuddly dog Mo. Full patterns are included, as are step-by-step photos and tips.

Sweet Pea Crochet
Beautiful baby blankets & matching gifts
Sue Rawlinson

Sweet Pea Crochet by Sue Rawlinson
£12.99, Club price £9.74
New baby in the family? Crochet a beautiful matching set for the little one. Each of the six projects includes a blanket, as well as other gifts.



How to Draw: Animals by Polly Pinder, Susie Hodge, Eva Dutton & Jonathan Newey
£12.99, Club price £9.74
Learn how to draw cute pets, impressive wild animals and amazing birds, using this fun and simple-to-follow method.



Needle Felting for Beginners by Roz Dace & Judy Balchin
£9.99, Club price £7.49
With 12 projects to get stuck into, you just need to choose where to start. Beginners will love this much-needed guide to a fascinating craft.

Macramé
FOR THE MODERN HOME
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Macramé for the Modern Home by Isabella Strambio
£12.99, Club price £9.74
Create eye-catching works of wall art and statement home decor, made with simple macramé knots, natural dyes and 100% recycled materials.

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10 of the best NEW mascaras

Get a fuller flutter with these lash lifters

VA-VA-VOLUME

Fibre mascaras are infused with tiny tendrils that cling onto your lashes to help add impressive length and volume. bareMinerals Maximist Mascara, **£23**, lookfantastic.com, makes a huge difference with just one sweep.

LIFT OFF

Silicone brushes can offer better results for lash lifting, giving you an open-eyed look without the lash curlers. e.l.f. Lash 'N Roll Curling Mascara, **£6**, elfcosmetics.co.uk, has great curl power.

GET GROWING

A lash serum and a mascara in one, Kiko 30 Days Extension Daily Treatment Mascara, **£10.99**, kikocosmetics.com, is infused with growth-boosting ingredients to help your lashes grow quicker and stronger.

MULTITASKING MARVEL

No7 4D Lift & Curl Mascara, **£14.95**, Boots, is designed to give the look of a salon lash-lift treatment. A hard-working buy, it lifts, curls, separates and volumises.

SOFT SHADE

Brown mascara is handy for those days where you want to look a bit more 'done', but without putting on a full face. Barry M Stormy Eyes Mascara in Dark Brown, **£5.99**, barrym.com, is the ideal shade for everyday wear.

TONE IT DOWN

As skin tone changes with age, swapping your jet-black mascara to a softer colour can look more flattering. Rimmel Thrill Seeker Mascara in Black/Brown, **£10.99**, Superdrug, is a perfect in-between tone.

REVAMPED CLASSIC

L'Oréal Paris Telescopic Lift Mascara, **£12.99**, Boots, has the lifting benefits of the original Telescopic, but also boosts volume and thickness.

MAGIC WAND

PS... Double Act Mascara, **£3**, Primark, has a clever applicator that's curved with a flat edge, so you can curl using one side, and separate and add volume with the other.

PRIME TIME

Primers can help prevent your mascara from running or smudging. Honest Beauty Extreme Length Mascara + Lash Primer, **£19**, lookfantastic.com, is a two-step buy. One side is a primer, and the other end has a brilliant volumising mascara.

TEAR PROOF

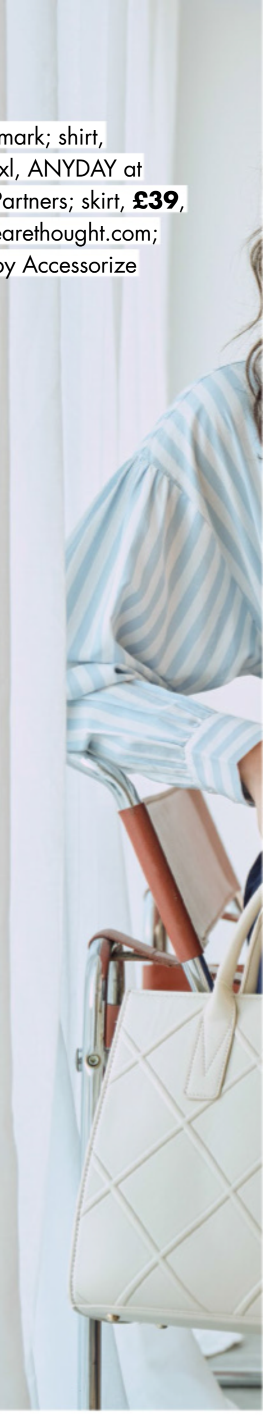
If you have weepy eyes, you may prefer to use a waterproof formula. Collection Long Shot Waterproof Lengthening Mascara, **£3.99**, Boots, is one that won't budge, at a pocket-friendly price.

WORDS: RHIANNON DERBYSHIRE

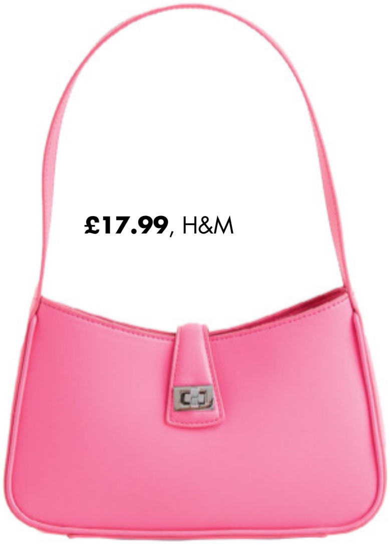
20 under £20

Beautiful BAGS

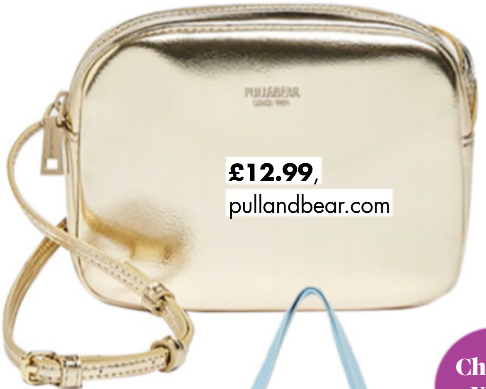
Refresh your wardrobe with one of these colourful budget buys



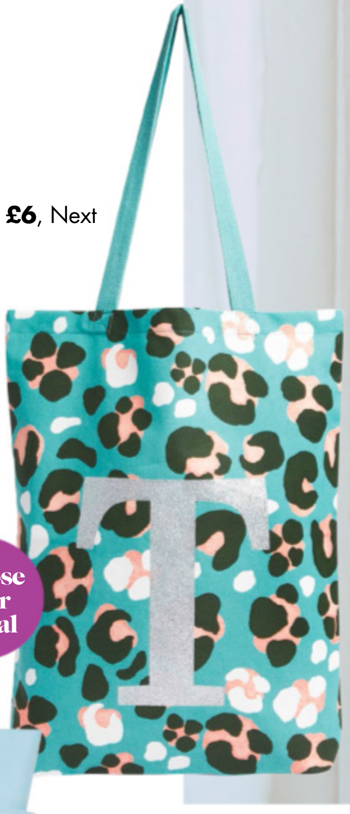
Bag, **£16**, Primark; shirt, **£28**, sizes xs-xl, ANYDAY at John Lewis & Partners; skirt, **£39**, sizes 6-18, wearethought.com; ring, **£20**, Z by Accessorize



£17.99, H&M

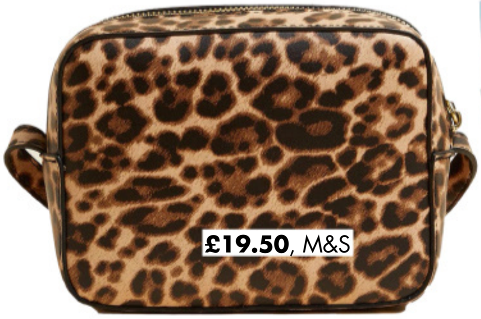


£12.99, pullandbear.com

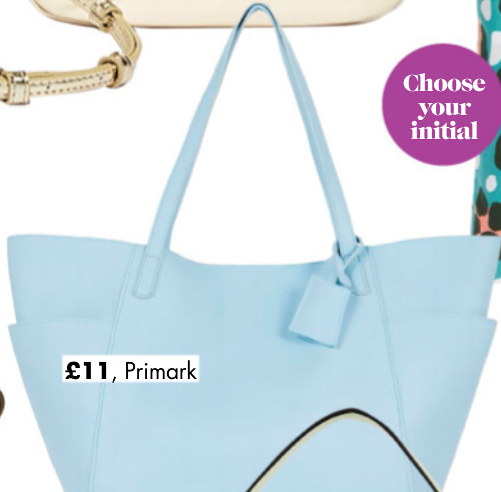


£6, Next

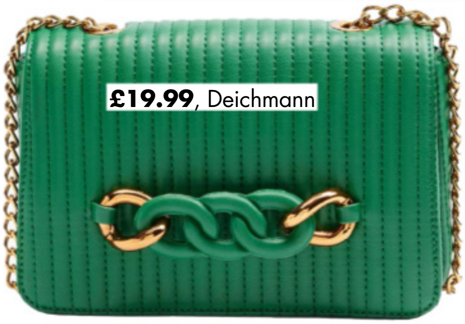
Choose your initial



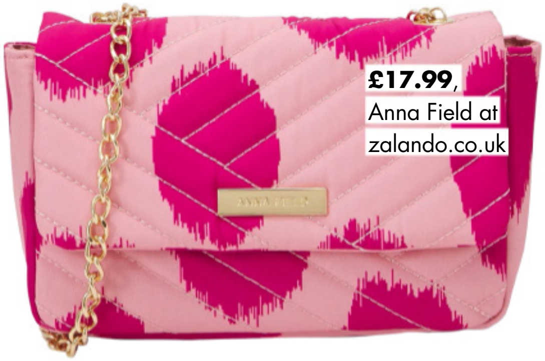
£19.50, M&S



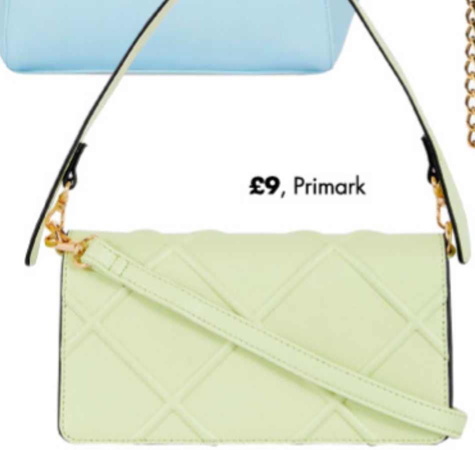
£11, Primark



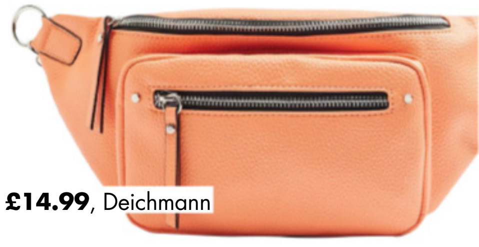
£19.99, Deichmann



£17.99, Anna Field at zalando.co.uk



£9, Primark



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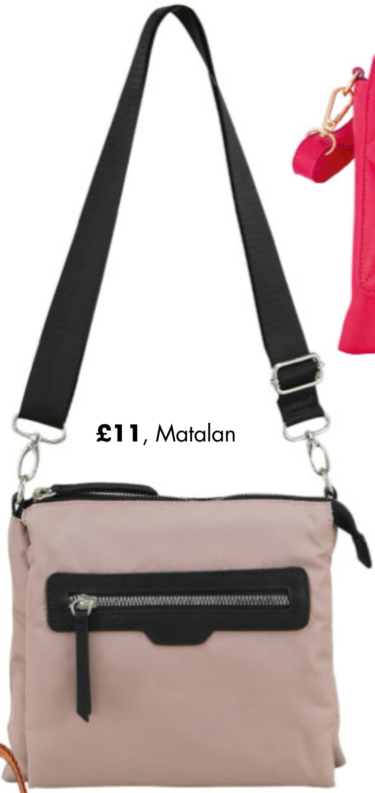

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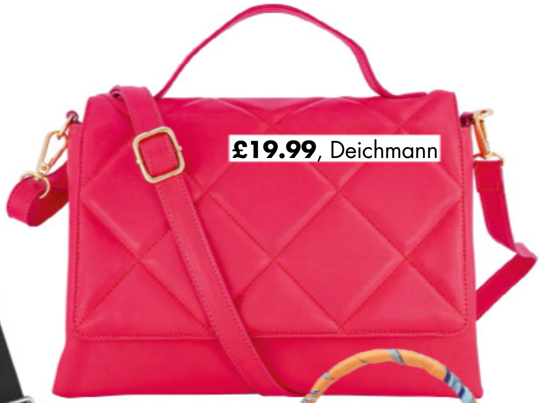

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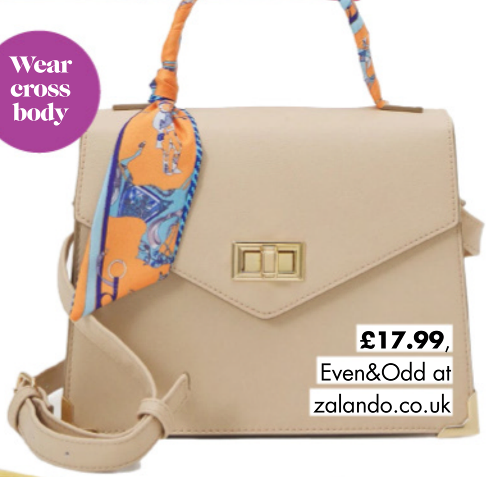
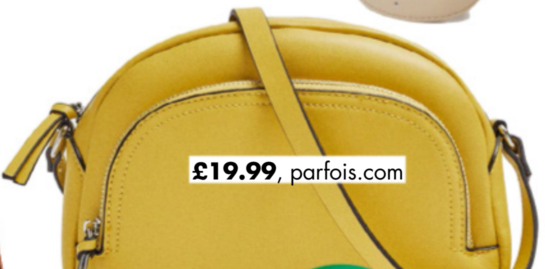
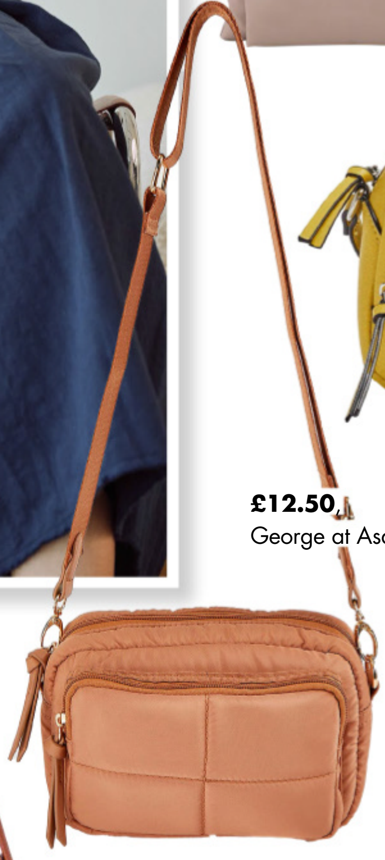


Wear cross body

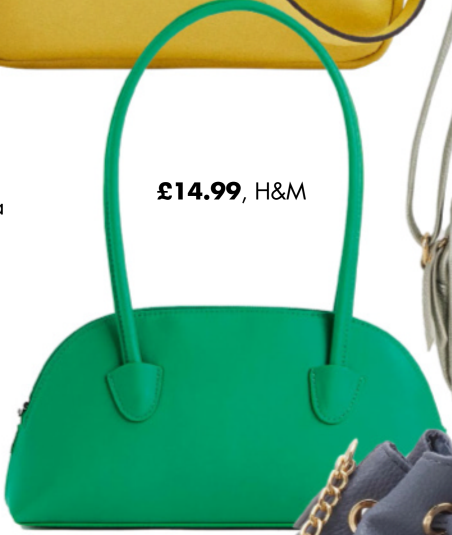
£17.99, Even&Odd at zalando.co.uk



£19.99, parfois.com



£12.50, George at Asda



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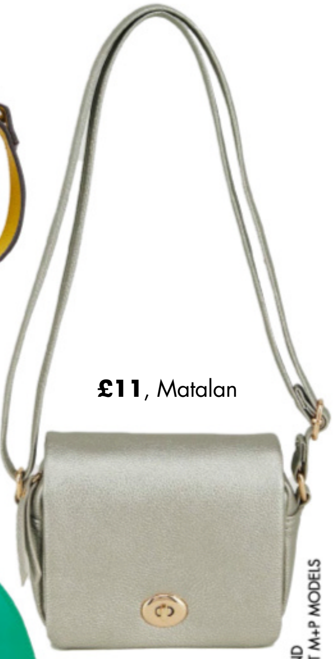
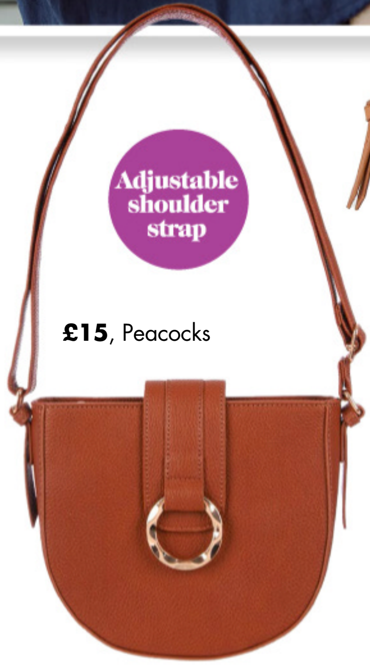
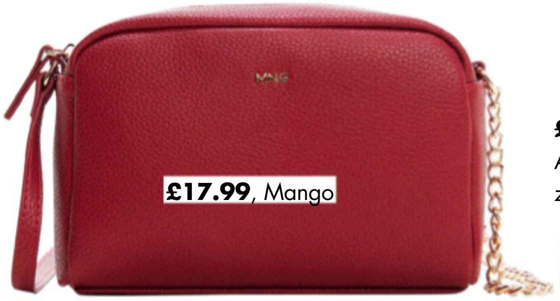


£11, Matalan

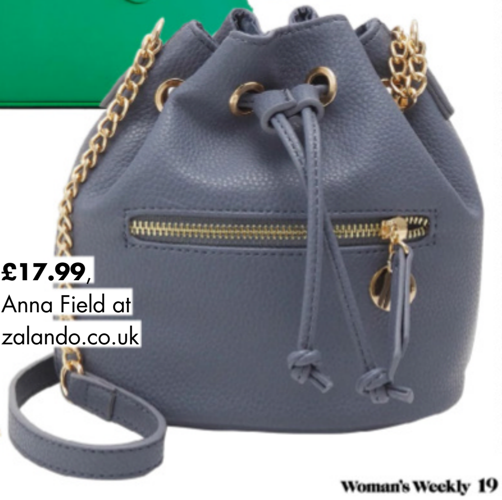


Adjustable shoulder strap

£15, Peacocks



£17.99, Mango



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A tribute TO MUM

As Mother's Day approaches, three daughters share stories of the special women in their lives

Lisa, her mother Lynne and daughter Lucia in 2016

'She showed me almost anything is possible'

Lisa Arterton, 39, is a trauma rehabilitation therapist and lives in Cheshire with her husband Edward, 40, and their children Ellie, 14, Lucia, seven, and Hugo, one.

Until the age of 11, my childhood was carefree. Brought up by my parents, along with my siblings, Peter, now 28, and Georgina, 30, I always felt we were a happy family. I was shocked in 1995 when my parents' marriage ended.

Mum did her best to carry on, although I know she struggled at times. But worse was to come. At 18, I'd just moved in with Simon – my partner at the time – and had started working for a tour operator – when I had a devastating phone call. Mum had had a stroke, aged 42.

She lost her ability to talk and walk, and the use of her right arm. I was able to take Peter and Georgina in – then seven and nine – so she could be rehabilitated in hospital. Eventually, we were told Mum would be disabled for life.

I wasn't sure how we would manage. Then she seemed to come into her own. She was determined to get her children back and show that she could cope, despite her limitations. She checked herself out of hospital and began to learn how to live independently again.

Against the odds, Mum proved she was able to look after my younger siblings fantastically. She'd fold school uniforms using her good hand and holding a garment in her mouth, and make trips to the shops on her mobility scooter to stock up on food, which she'd carry back in her basket.

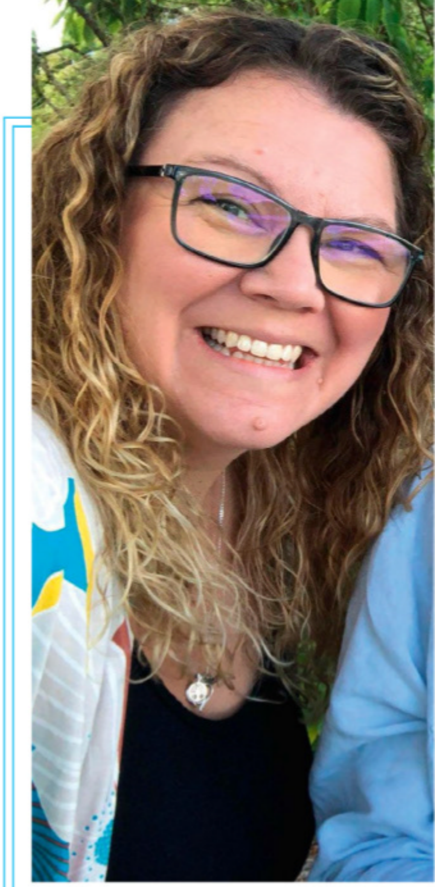
In 2004, Mum moved into a purpose-built bungalow, which helped significantly. Simon and I moved to the next street to be closer.

Throughout it all, Mum kept smiling and laughing. She couldn't talk, but we developed our very own language and she did an amazing job at overcoming obstacles.

Sadly, Mum contracted lung cancer and died in 2017, at 58, but I hope she knew what an inspiration she was and always will be to me. When things are tough, I think of her. She showed me that with the right attitude, almost anything is possible.

'When things are tough, I think of her'

WORDS: GILLIAN HARVEY



'Mum helped my dream come true'

Lottie Reeves, 40, is a perinatal educator and practitioner, and runs a glamping business. She lives in Castle Douglas with her partner Kevin, 38, her mum

'My mother vowed the future would be different'

Maria Jones, 45, is CEO of Yuva Yoga and lives in Aberdeen with husband Ifor, 55, and their son Andreas, 15.

Some might say I'm 'lucky'. I have a great home and career, and I am happily married. But rather than luck, I have my incredible mum to thank.

Elissavet was born in Greece and aged 16 was subject to an arranged marriage. It was commonplace for girls at that time – often as a way to relieve financial pressures on families. But her husband – my father – had

Three generations: Lottie, her mum Caroline and daughter Matilda

Caroline, 72, and daughters Matilda, two, and Aviela, six months.

My mum and I have always made a great team – as a single mum she worked hard to give me a wonderful childhood. I have memories of visits to National Trust houses, and each year we would go on holiday with Granny and Pop – just the four of us.

I moved to London when I was in my 20s, then in 2011, I accepted a role working overseas on community development projects, ending up in South Africa in 2014. Mum and I missed each other, but she had always told me to follow my dreams.

She became a councillor in Guildford in her 50s, and was a real pillar of the community.

After our projects finished, I went travelling with my boyfriend Kevin, whom I'd met in South Africa.

In 2017, we decided to move back to the UK, where Kevin and I lived on a narrowboat. We had both talked about how we'd love to run an outdoorsy business together, and imagined the day we'd be able to afford our very own patch of land to set up a glamping business.

In 2020, I fell pregnant with Matilda, and it was during that time Mum made us an amazing offer. 'Why don't I sell up and join you?' she said, explaining that with her financial input we could bring our vision to fruition.

Once we were sure Mum was serious, we gratefully accepted her offer to join us in our adventure, and in May 2021, we moved into a Georgian manor house in Scotland; a property we'd all fallen in love with online.

Renovating our home and setting up the business has been harder than expected, but we finally had permission to start our glamping enterprise last November, and plan to open this summer.

Kevin works in the movie industry and he is often away, so sometimes it is just Mum, me and the girls.

'I wonder if she misses living alone!'

We're a noisy bunch and I do wonder if Mum misses living alone! Saying that, we are all so happy here – Mum has already involved herself in the local neighbourhood and gets to spend lots of time with the children.

Every time I look at the gorgeous views, or consider our lovely new home, I know that Mum helped me make my dream come true.

---

strict ideas about a woman's place and treated my mother terribly. In 1978, he even set her on fire, simply for wearing a miniskirt.

My mother vowed the future would be different – one night in 1983, when I was six, she took me in the back of a friend's truck to the safety of my grandparents' house. There, we received proper care, and as I grew up, I was able to get an education.

Although fiercely intelligent, Mum only went to primary school. She knew education was my key to a better life and encouraged me to work hard.

And in 1995, I obtained qualifications equivalent to A levels and was offered a place at a Greek university. But Mum urged me to apply to the UK, to take opportunities she'd never had.

'Mum urged me to take opportunities'

A year of applications, references and planning later I found myself at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, where I completed my BEng in Chemical Engineering.

Although money was tight, Mum supported me financially throughout; and I'd make ends meet by waitressing outside of term time. I was determined to make her proud. I also met Ifor at university and as graduate engineers, we settled in Aberdeen and worked in the oil industry.

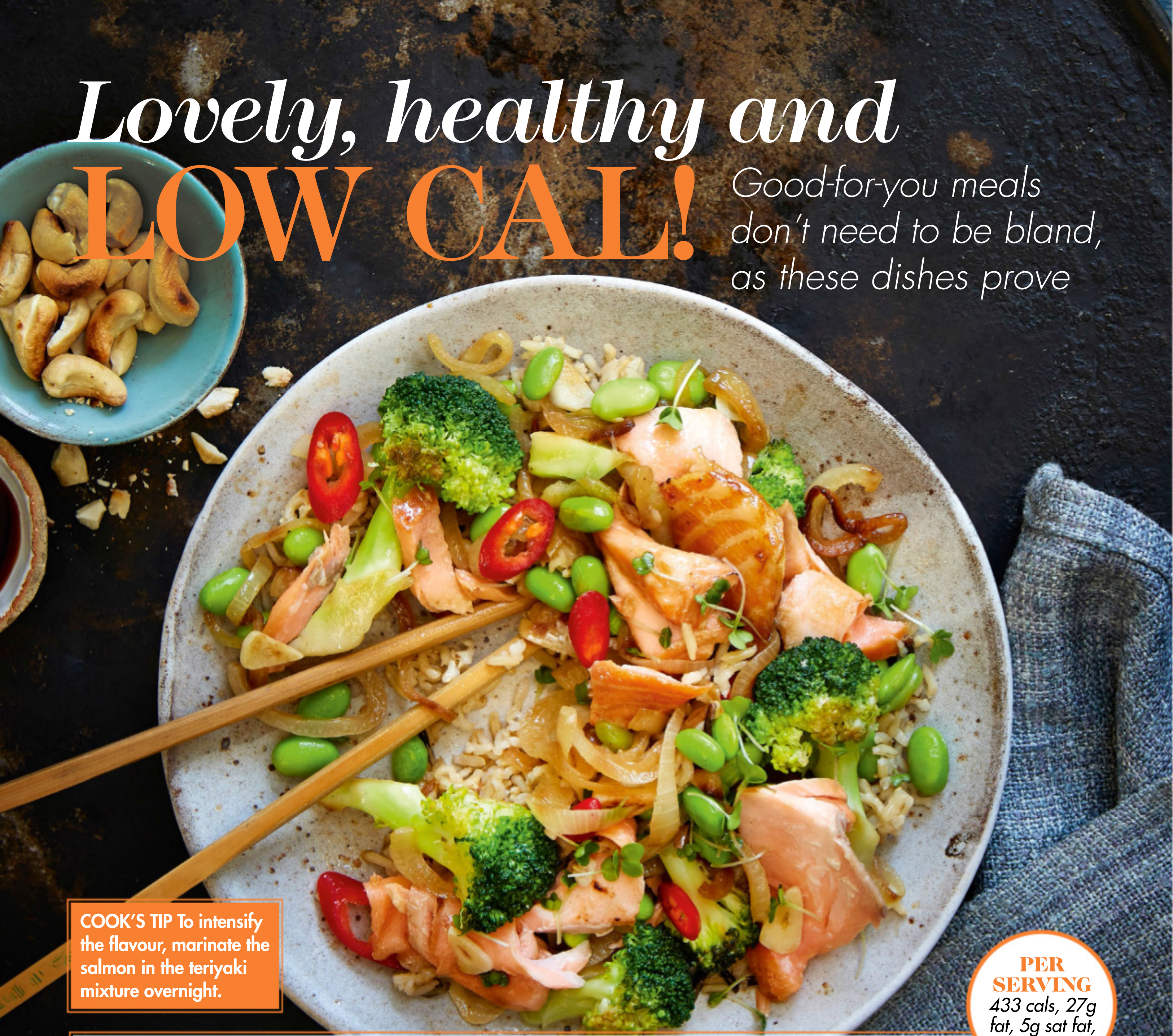
Unfortunately, in 2004, I was diagnosed with systemic lupus and in 2007, when my son was born, I suffered kidney failure. With Ifor's support, I was able to change job and return to studies in health and nutrition.

Always in touch: Maria and Elissavet

I now work as a yoga teacher for people with chronic illness. Mum, now 63, still lives in Greece, but we message every day, talk once a week and I go to Greece as often as I can. As a mother myself, I understand even more her sacrifice in encouraging me to 'escape'. My life is good and I owe it all to my mum.

Lovely, healthy and LOW CAL!

Good-for-you meals don't need to be bland, as these dishes prove



COOK'S TIP To intensify the flavour, marinate the salmon in the teriyaki mixture overnight.

PER SERVING
433 cals, 27g fat, 5g sat fat, 15g carbs

SALMON TERIYAKI WITH WOK-FRIED GREENS

The perfect balance of a sweet and salty marinade, and charred stir-fried broccoli, elevates the baked salmon.

SERVES 4
PREP 15 MINS
COOK 15 MINS

- **3tbsp teriyaki sauce**
- **1tbsp maple syrup**
- **500g salmon fillet**
- **50g cashew nuts**
- **100g frozen, podded edamame beans**
- **2tsp sesame oil**
- **1 onion, finely sliced**
- **2 garlic cloves, sliced**
- **1 broccoli, cut into florets and halved**
- **1tsp soy sauce**
- **1 red chilli, deseeded and finely sliced**
- **Juice ½ lime**
- **1tbsp salad cress**
- **Basmati or wild rice, cooked to serve**

1 Heat the oven to 170C Fan/Gas 5. Mix the teriyaki sauce and syrup. Put the salmon into an ovenproof dish, season, then spoon over sauce. Set aside to marinate.

2 In a wok, over a medium heat, toast the cashew nuts, tossing regularly, until golden. Set aside.

3 Boil the beans for 3 mins, then refresh in cold water.

4 Bake the salmon in the marinade for 15 mins.

5 Meanwhile, wipe the wok and add the sesame oil. Add the onion and cook until soft. Add the garlic and cook for 2 mins more. Increase the heat to medium-high. Add the broccoli, soy sauce and 2tbsp water. Cover and cook for around 10 mins, stirring occasionally and adding a little water if needed. When the broccoli is tender, remove from the heat and stir in the beans, chilli and lime juice.

6 Flake the cooked salmon, discarding the skin. Stir any marinade left in the dish and drizzle on top. Chop the nuts and scatter over with the salad cress. Serve with rice.

COMPILED BY: ROSE FOOKS. RECIPES AND PHOTOS: FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM

CHICKEN BIRYANI

A wonderfully flavoursome rice from the Indian subcontinent that's a doddle to make at home.

SERVES 4
PREP 30 MINS, PLUS MARINATING
COOK 1 HR

- **2tbsp vegetable oil**
- **2 red onions, finely chopped**
- **500g skinless and boneless chicken thigh fillets**
- **¾tsp sea salt flakes**
- **4 strands saffron**
- **200g basmati rice, washed**
- **4 cardamom pods**
- **40g dried cranberries**
- **Small bunch coriander, chopped**
- **15g ghee or butter**

For the marinade:

- **2tsp ground cumin**
- **2tsp garam masala**
- **2tsp finely grated fresh ginger**
- **120g natural yogurt**
- **Juice ½ lime, plus lime wedges, to serve**

1 Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onions and fry gently for 10 mins until softened and caramelised.

2 Transfer into a large bowl with the chicken and marinade ingredients, plus ½tsp sea salt. Toss well, then cover and marinate in the fridge for 1 hr.

3 Heat the oven to 200C/Gas 6. Add the saffron to 50ml hot water and leave to infuse for 20 mins.

4 Put the rice in a pan with the cardamom pods and ¼tsp sea salt. Cover with water, so it comes around 1cm above the rice. Bring to the boil. Cover and reduce the heat to the minimum setting. Cook for 10 mins until just cooked but still a little firm.

5 In a casserole, layer half the chicken and marinade, then half of the cooked rice. Repeat and top with the saffron water and cranberries. Cook for 1 hr with the lid on. Mix through the coriander and the ghee or butter. Season and serve with lime wedges.

PER SERVING
493 cals, 14g fat, 4g sat fat, 57g carbs

COOK'S TIP If you're feeling extra hungry, serve this with a saucy dal on the side.

RAMEN BOWLS

Enjoy our simplified version of Japan's well-known noodle soup for a hearty dish worthy of a Sunday lunch.

PER SERVING
678 cals, 31g fat, 9g sat fat, 58g carbs

COOK'S TIP Swap the pork belly for leftover cooked chicken or pork. Add the meat to the broth and heat through. If you don't have both miso pastes, just use one variety.

SERVES 4
PREP 10 MINS
COOK 1 HR 15 MINS

- **480g pork belly slices**
- **100g shiitake mushrooms, left whole**
- **4 whole garlic cloves, crushed**
- **2tsp smoked sea salt flakes**
- **1tbsp sugar**
- **2tsp soy sauce**
- **1tbsp white miso**
- **2tbsp red miso**
- **1tbsp mirin seasoning**
- **½tbsp brown rice vinegar**
- **2tsp toasted sesame oil**
- **600ml umami stock**
- **2 baby pak choi, halved**
- **4 eggs, at room temperature**
- **240g dry ramen noodles, cooked according to the pack instructions**
- **3 spring onions, sliced**
- **6 radishes, sliced**

1 Put the pork, mushrooms, whole garlic cloves, sea salt and sugar into a pan, cover with 750ml water, bring to a simmer and cook for 30 mins. Scoop off any foam.

2 Mix the soy sauce, both types of miso, the mirin seasoning, vinegar and sesame oil. Add this to the pan with the stock, cover and simmer for 45 mins more, until the pork is cooked through.

3 Bring a small pan of water to the boil 15 mins before the broth is ready. Cook the pak choi for 2 mins, then remove from the pan and refresh in cold water.

4 Boil the eggs for 8 mins, then rinse under cold water, peel and cut in half.

5 To assemble, add the noodles to 4 warm, deep bowls, spoon over the broth, then top each bowl with the pork, halved egg, pak choi, spring onions and sliced radishes.

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Get away FOR LESS

Save money on your next holiday with these clever tips

WORDS: ALICIA MILLER. PHOTOS (POSED BY MODELS): GETTY

Whether you're planning a rail trip, hiring a car or hopping on a flight, booking somewhere to stay or exchanging money, there are savings to be made.

Hotel discounts

If you've found your hotel on an aggregator website (where information is collected in one place), such as booking.com, don't book it there right away. Instead, call or email the hotel to see if they'll offer you a better price. Because hotels have to pay commission fees to most aggregator websites, they often offer direct bookers lower prices, or extras like breakfast, a nicer room or a free bottle of wine.

Loyalty points

Even if you aren't a frequent traveller, it pays to sign up to free airline or hotel loyalty programmes. With some hotel groups, such as Marriott Bonvoy, just being a member entitles you to complimentary in-room Wi-Fi and special room rates. Also, some airlines award you points every time you fly, which can be used for free upgrades or discounted future flights.

Hire-car insurance

When you borrow a rental car, companies will try to sell you their own insurance policy. These typically come at hugely inflated prices and could add up to hundreds of pounds a week. You could take out a hire-car insurance policy with a third-party company, such as icarhire insurance.com, which might cost only £40-£50 a year. Just read the small print, so you know what's covered.

Good to know

Currency exchange

Never change your cash at an airport, where rates are likely to be poor. Shop around online at websites such as Travelex or the Post Office, and order it in advance. If you're tech savvy, you could also consider getting a Curve card, which links to your normal bank account but lets you spend abroad at better exchange rates.

Cheap flights

Don't simply choose your favourite airline; by shopping around you can find the best fare, whether by flying indirectly, shifting your dates or departing from a different airport, say, London Luton rather than London Heathrow. Aggregator websites, such as skyscanner.com, allow you to compare the options to find the cheapest.

Rail fares

When travelling by train in the UK, there's one big rule: book early. Unlike airline and flight prices, which are linked to demand, rail ticket prices tend to go up the closer to the date you want to go. If you use the train often, or are making a long journey, consider getting a Railcard for discounts. For example, the Two Together Railcard (twotogether-railcard.co.uk) lets the same two people travel together at a discount of up to 30%. Sometimes you can even make the £30 annual cost back in one trip.

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LYNDI COHEN

Lyndi Cohen is a nutritionist

Your Weight is not the Problem

Lyndi Cohen

My fail-safe remedy
Not dieting! As soon as I tell myself 'you can't eat sugar' or 'try to be good', I'm bound to end up feeling out of control around food and eating way more. I've tried countless diets and they work, but only temporarily. The only way I've found works for me (and countless others) to lose weight, keep it off and be healthy is a no-diet approach. No more yo-yo dieting or starting from scratch every Monday like I used to!

My favourite meal
Either a one-tray bake or a one-pot wonder. I'm a busy mum who proudly takes shortcuts when I cook. If I can get dinner done with minimal washing-up and create a balanced meal the whole family will eat, then I'm very pleased. My Mexican Mac n Cheese is a go-to, as it has healthy ingredients loaded into it, and is seriously quick and tasty.

How I keep fit and healthy
Daily mental health walks are essential for my wellbeing. Sadly, for years I associated exercise with punishment for eating, a gruelling way to 'fix' my stomach and supposed 'weight problem'. But now, I only do exercise that I enjoy. As a result, it has become something that I want to do rather than something that requires willpower. Ultimately, a 20-minute walk (even a slow one) is always better than an hour at the gym that simply never happens.

My perfect day
It includes NO laundry, but a clean house and time for me. But given that I live with a pterodactyl (ahem, I mean a toddler), this is rare and unlikely. I would settle for a swim in the ocean or a long walk… followed by some chocolate, of course!

+ Lyndi Cohen is the author of *Your Weight Is Not the Problem* (£11.99, Murdoch Books).

Newsflash

Ultra-processed foods increase cancer risk

If you eat too much mass-produced bread, breakfast cereal, crisps, ham and ice cream, you could be more likely to get any type of cancer, according to a new study. Researchers at Imperial College London found that you're also more likely to die from cancer if you do get it. They believe the chemicals and colourings used in these foods to prolong their shelf life are responsible for the raised cancer risk.

WORDS: TANYA PEAREY. PHOTOS: GETTY. IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH, SEE YOUR GP. CHECK WITH YOUR GP OR MEDICAL EXPERT BEFORE TAKING NEW SUPPLEMENTS

3 houseplants… to help fight mould

ENGLISH IVY

This plant helps to remove airborne mould and toxins. Excessive moisture in your home can cause damp and mould, which irritates your respiratory system.

PEACE LILY

It thrives in high humidity, so is perfect for areas prone to mould. It absorbs moisture in the air through its leaves and doesn't need direct sunlight.

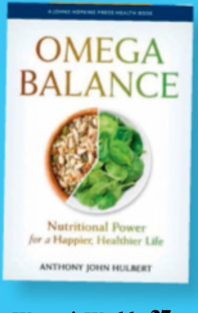
PALMS

They also help to control humidity. Varieties to look out for include Areca palms, bamboo palms, the lady palm, dwarf date palm and reed palm.

NEW READ

OMEGA BALANCE (£22, Johns Hopkins University Press)

Have a happier, healthier life by making sure your omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids are in balance. Anthony J Hulbert explains the importance of these fats in our diets, and how to harness their power to help you fight obesity, cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and maintain a healthy brain.



OMEGA BALANCE

Nutritional Power for a Happier, Healthier Life

ANTHONY JOHN HULBERT

Dr Gill

Advice from our Woman's Weekly doctor

Dr Gill Jenkins has more than 25 years' experience as a GP

Leisure activities and dementia

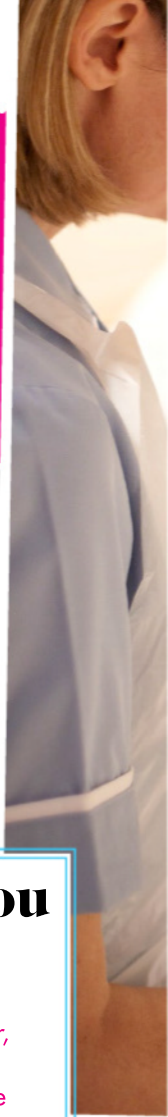
A huge review of 38 studies with data on more than two million individuals confirms that people who keep active are less likely to develop dementia. Participation in cognitive, physical and social activities was associated with a 20% reduction in both Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. But it's unclear if leisure activities protect against dementia, or just that those people destined to avoid it are also the sort who tend to stay active.

A WEEKLY DOSE OF INSULIN

For many type 2 diabetics, the necessary move to insulin injections, once or more daily, is a daunting step. Clinical trials are now in progress looking at a once-weekly Icodec insulin injection. So far, it looks to be safe and effective at reducing HbA1c, and has significantly greater Diabetes Treatment Satisfaction Questionnaire scores. The interpretation of phase 3 trial results is now underway, but it could offer a better option for patients if it goes well.

Coping with LEG ULCERS

These long-lasting venous sores take more than two weeks to heal



Leg ulcers usually develop on the inside of the leg, between the knee and the ankle. Venous leg ulcers are the most common, causing 60% of cases, affecting one in 500 people in the UK, more commonly with age.

They can develop after a minor injury, with persistently high pressure in the leg veins weakening the skin. Symptoms include pain, itching and swelling. There may be discoloured or hardened skin around the ulcer, with a foul-smelling discharge.

See your GP if you think that you have a leg ulcer, as it will need specialist treatment to help healing. Your GP will examine your leg and may carry out additional tests to rule out other conditions.

You're more at risk of developing one if you previously had deep-vein thrombosis (DVT), or have difficulty walking from arthritis, or have a leg injury, obesity or paralysis, after recent leg surgery or if you have varicose veins.

Ways to prevent recurrent leg ulcers include wearing compression stockings at all times once out of bed; elevating your leg when possible; losing weight if overweight; exercising regularly, if you're able; stopping smoking, and moderating alcohol intake.

Most venous leg ulcers heal within six months if they're treated by a healthcare professional trained in compression therapy for leg ulcers. But some may take longer and a very small number never do. Once you have had a venous leg ulcer, another ulcer is more likely.

Treatments you might have

- **Cleaning and dressing** Remove debris or dead tissue from the ulcer, wash and dry it, then apply an appropriate dressing to provide the best conditions for the ulcer to heal.
- **Compression** Reduces swelling. The nurse applies a firm compression bandage over the affected leg, to squeeze your legs, encouraging blood to flow towards your heart.
- **Antibiotics** Given if the ulcer becomes infected, but they don't help all of them heal. If you have varicose eczema, emollient creams and, sometimes, steroids may be used.
- **Underlying causes** These include immobility, obesity, previous DVT or varicose veins. They need treatment, otherwise there's a high risk of a venous leg ulcer coming back after treatment.

Other common types include arterial leg ulcers – from poor blood circulation in the arteries; diabetic leg ulcers – caused by the high blood sugar associated with poorly controlled diabetes; vasculitic leg ulcers – linked to chronic inflammatory disorders, such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus; traumatic

PHOTOS (POSED BY MODELS): GETTY.

DR GILL IS UNABLE TO OFFER INDIVIDUAL ADVICE OR SEE INDIVIDUAL PATIENTS. ADVICE GIVEN HERE IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY. SEEK HELP FROM YOUR GP IF YOU HAVE A MEDICAL PROBLEM

Q How quickly do antibiotics work?

A You may not feel antibiotics taking effect for two or three days, or maybe longer, depending on the type of infection you're on them for. The important thing is to take them as prescribed for you and the type of infection you have, until the end of the recommended course of treatment, even if you're starting to feel better.

When antibiotics are overused, used when they are not needed or, conversely, not used for the full prescribed duration, the bacteria they are supposed to treat can change and develop resistance. This can mean that, eventually, antibiotics may no longer work. Antibiotic resistance is now a problem worldwide. It means common infections, such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, blood poisoning, gonorrhoea and food-borne diseases, are now becoming harder, and in some cases impossible, to treat. This is why doctors will no longer routinely prescribe antibiotics for conditions like mild chest infections, ear infections (for children) and sore throats, saving them for when it's absolutely necessary.

leg ulcers – caused by injury to the leg, and malignant leg ulcers – resulting from a tumour on the leg's skin.

Most ulcers caused by artery disease or diabetes occur on the foot rather than the leg. Try to keep active by walking regularly. Sitting, and standing still without raising your legs, can make venous leg ulcers and swelling worse.

In some cases, your GP or specialist nurse may refer you to someone who focuses on treating conditions affecting the blood vessels, such as a rheumatologist or endocrinologist (an expert in diabetes) if they suspect your ulcer may be caused by these conditions.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Being overweight shortens your life expectancy True. Previously studies showed overweight people had lower risks of mortality compared to the underweight or obese. But a 2018 study looking at the body mass index (BMI) of 300,000 people found heart attacks, stroke and high blood pressure risk increased as body mass index rose. Another study found that overweight and obese people had greater risks of cardiovascular disease, and obese people had a shorter lifespan than normal weight and overweight adults.

4 fixes for... anger

1 THINK BEFORE SPEAKING
In the heat of the moment, it's easy to say something you'll later regret. Step back and let others do the same.

2 CALM DOWN, THEN EXPRESS YOURSELF
Once thinking clearly, state in an assertive but non-confrontational way your concerns and needs.

3 GET SOME EXERCISE
Physical activity helps reduce stress, which causes fury. If your anger is escalating, take a brisk walk, or run or do other enjoyable physical activities.

4 TAKE TIME OUT
Planning short, quiet breaks during stressful periods might help you feel better prepared to handle what's ahead, without getting irate.

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Here to help

Our relationship expert Keren Smedley has over 20 years' experience

Let counsellor Keren lighten your load

My friend's upset me

Q I've been looking to buy a house but I've not found something I like. One of my closest friends called me to say she'd found the perfect place. I went to look and it wasn't in good condition. When I asked her why she'd suggested it, she said I had unrealistic expectations and needed to see what I can afford. I felt really belittled by her and I'm not sure what to do.
Laura, Blackpool

A I'm not surprised that you were upset, as it doesn't seem a very caring way to behave, but perhaps she got overly defensive when you said you didn't like it. Could your friend be right and you're looking for something you won't find? Maybe she was genuinely wanting to help you. Or, otherwise, is she envious that you can buy a property? Either way, I think you need to have a chat with her, and find out her motive and express your hurt.

I am torn between my son and my partner

Q I have an autistic son who's 35. He lives with me because he would struggle to live on his own. After a lot of years on my own, I've fallen in love with a lovely man, who wants us to live together in his home. He doesn't want my son there, as he doesn't like him. I really want to move but I worry about my son, and if it's all right for him to not be liked?
Melissa, Worthing

A I want to ask you a difficult question, if I may. What makes a man lovely? For you, it sounds like it isn't someone who loves you and your family, someone who's willing to embrace every aspect of your life. I'm wondering if you really feel comfortable about being asked to choose between your son and him? I understand it's nice to have found a partner and that you don't want to lose him. But I think you need to discuss this further and be clear that, if your son isn't liked, that's a real problem. That doesn't mean you can't also explore alternative living arrangements for your son, but he needs to be welcome to visit and stay whenever you want.

✣ Keren welcomes your letters, emails and texts, but she cannot reply to individual cases and will select correspondence at random for publication.

Have I made the wrong choice?

Q My GP often has trainee doctors with him. He always asks if I'm happy for them to remain but I don't want a 'voyeur', so I've said no. My friend's son is now a medical student and has complained to her that it was hard to learn, as so many patients said no to him sitting in on their appointments. I'm now wondering if my response is right. I still don't want anyone else there.
Jane, Edinburgh

A Both of the things you have said are right. Doctors learn by seeing live patients and patients can decide who sees them. I would invite you to think about why you object to them being there. I'm not sure they're 'voyeurs', though; I think they're apprentices and learning their trade. I can't believe they have any interest in you personally – only in your condition. If you can depersonalise this, you might find it easier to say yes. That said, it is still 100% your choice.

I'm not sure if I should take this job

Q I went to an interview at a children's centre recently and the CEO, who was part of the interview panel, sat on her computer and typed most of the time. She didn't look at me or ask any questions. Her deputy did all the talking. The deputy called to offer me the role but I'm not sure I want to work somewhere where the CEO is so rude. On the other hand, it is seven minutes from home and fits all my other criteria.
Name and address withheld

A I must admit that does sound like an unprofessional way to behave. But, while I'm not excusing the CEO's behaviour, maybe in this centre the deputy takes the lead in recruitment and the CEO does so in other areas? I think it would be a good idea to do a little more research by asking others who know the centre. Perhaps you could suggest doing a day visit so you can gauge the atmosphere before you make your final choice? Only you can decide what makes a place of work acceptable to you. If the other criteria outweigh the negatives displayed by the CEO, you may choose to accept. If you decide they don't, there will always be other job opportunities.

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Brushstroke seat cushion, **£11**, Habitat at Sainsbury's

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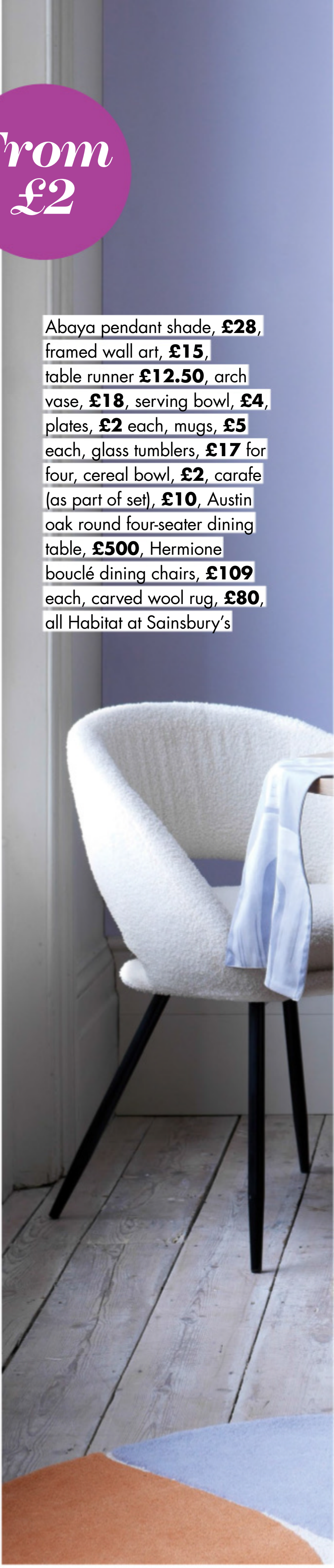
Fill up your trolley with these pretty home buys



Abaya pendant shade, **£28**, framed wall art, **£15**, table runner **£12.50**, arch vase, **£18**, serving bowl, **£4**, plates, **£2** each, mugs, **£5** each, glass tumblers, **£17** for four, cereal bowl, **£2**, carafe (as part of set), **£10**, Austin oak round four-seater dining table, **£500**, Hermione bouclé dining chairs, **£109** each, carved wool rug, **£80**, all Habitat at Sainsbury's

Tea towels, **£6.50** for three, Habitat at Sainsbury's

Yellow stripe cotton rug, from **£20**, George Home at Asda

Yellow ceramic planter, **£18**, George Home at Asda

Pom-pom place mats, **£14** for four, M&S

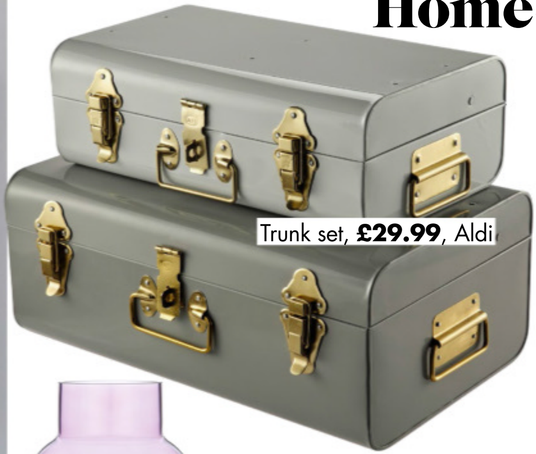
Natural felt and straw storage basket, **£9.99**, Aldi

Marlowe mugs, **£20** for four, M&S

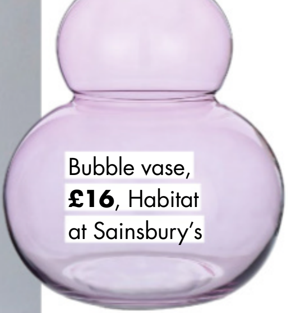
Lilac floral highball glass, **£12** for set of four, George Home at Asda

Bobble frame, **£12.50**, M&S

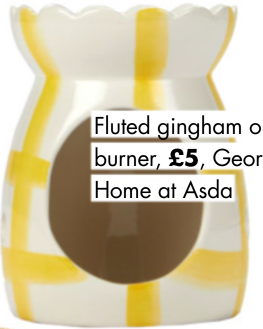
COMPILED BY: ESME CLEMO. PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF WRITING



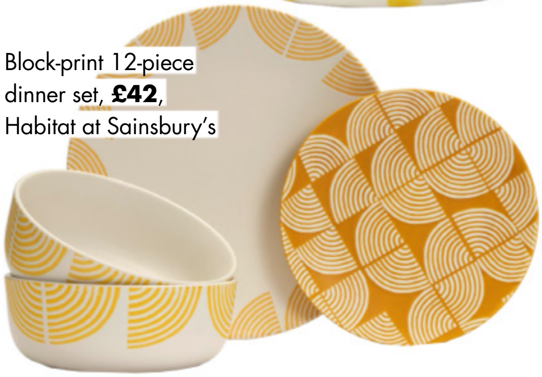
Trunk set, **£29.99**, Aldi



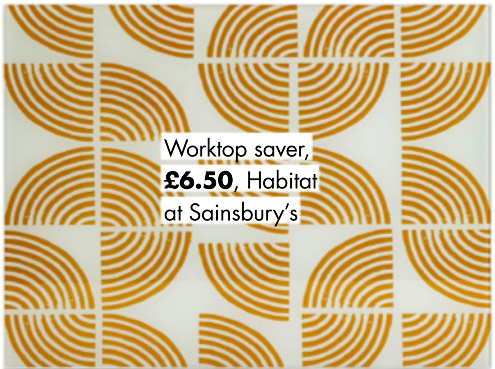
Bubble vase, **£16**, Habitat at Sainsbury's



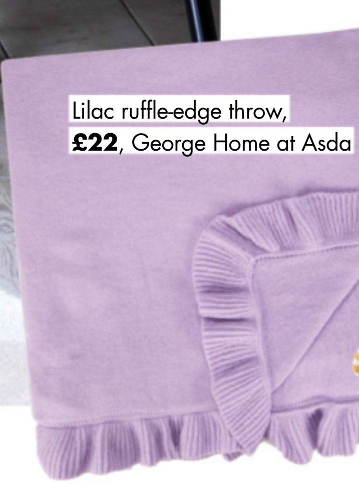
Fluted gingham oil burner, **£5**, George Home at Asda



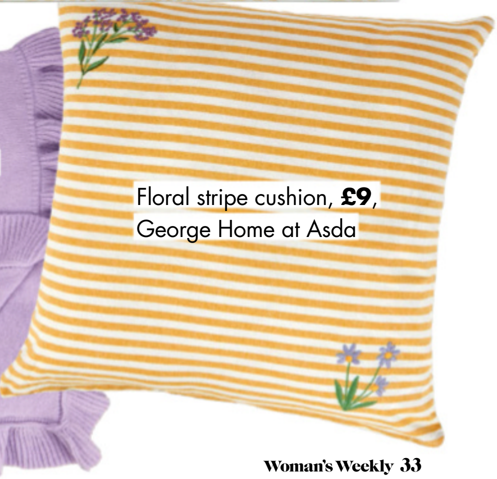
Block-print 12-piece dinner set, **£42**, Habitat at Sainsbury's



Worktop saver, **£6.50**, Habitat at Sainsbury's



Lilac ruffle-edge throw, **£22**, George Home at Asda



Floral stripe cushion, **£9**, George Home at Asda

Showstopping PUDDINGS

Treat your guests to one of these sensational prepare-ahead desserts at your next get-together

RHUBARB AND GINGER TRIFLE

Comforting in flavour and spectacular in looks, this updated classic will be a hit with the family.

SERVES 8
PREP 30 MINS, PLUS CHILLING
COOK 10-20 MINS

- **100g caster sugar**
- **Zest and juice 1 orange**
- **2 balls stem ginger in syrup, diced, plus 50ml of the syrup**
- **500g rhubarb, trimmed weight, cut into 5cm batons**
- **1 ginger loaf cake, approx 230g, cut into 6 even-sized slices**
- **500ml fresh custard**
- **300ml double cream**
- **Ginger biscuits, crushed**

You will need:

- **18cm-diameter trifle dish, approx 2.5ltr**

1 The day before serving, put the sugar in a medium pan with 50ml water, the orange zest and juice, and the stem ginger syrup. Heat until the sugar has dissolved. Add the rhubarb and gently simmer for 5-10 mins, until it is tender but still holding its shape. Use a slotted spoon to remove the rhubarb and transfer to a bowl. Set aside 150ml juice to cool.

2 Reduce the remaining juice in the pan until thick and syrupy – about 5-10 mins.

3 Line the base of the trifle dish with the ginger loaf slices, starting at the edge, then fill in the middle. Pour over the cooled rhubarb juice, then scatter with the diced stem ginger.

4 Layer the rhubarb chunks and any other juices with the custard in an even layer, then cover with cling film and place in the fridge to firm up for at least 1 hr.

5 Remove the trifle from the fridge around 30 mins before you want to serve. Lightly whip the cream, ripple two-thirds of the cooled rhubarb syrup through it and spoon generously on top of the custard. Drizzle with the remaining rhubarb syrup and scatter over the crushed ginger biscuits.

PER SERVING
448 cals, 25g fat, 14g sat fat, 51g carbs

LUSCIOUS ORANGE PARFAIT

A colourful frozen option that's easy to prepare ahead of time.

PER SERVING
384 cals, 27g fat, 17g sat fat, 32g carbs

SERVES 10
READY IN 35 MINS, PLUS OVERNIGHT FREEZING

- **3 oranges, 1 thinly sliced, and zest and juice of 2**
- **4 medium egg yolks**
- **175g caster sugar**
- **200ml double cream**
- **350ml crème fraiche**
- **1tsp vanilla bean paste**

For the syrup:

- **Juice 1 blush orange**
- **100g caster sugar**

You will need:

- **900g loaf tin, lined with a double layer of cling film**

1 Start this recipe the day before serving. Arrange the sliced orange in the base of the prepared loaf tin.

2 Put the egg yolks and sugar in a heatproof bowl with 1tbsp water. Set the bowl over a pan of gently simmering water and, using an electric hand whisk, beat for 5 mins until pale and thickened. Set aside to cool.

3 In a separate bowl, whisk the cream, crème fraiche and vanilla until it forms stiff peaks. Fold in the egg yolk mixture, the and zest and juice of 2 oranges (about 125ml), then spoon into the tin. Fold over the cling film to cover the surface and freeze it overnight.

4 For the syrup, put the orange juice and sugar in a small pan. Heat gently, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 5 mins until thickened and syrupy. Leave to cool, then chill until ready to serve.

5 Remove the parfait from the freezer and leave to stand for 10 mins. Use the cling film to lift out of the loaf tin onto a serving plate. Cut into slices with a hot knife and drizzle with a little syrup to serve.

COOK'S TIP Save leftover egg whites for other recipes. Beat with a pinch of sugar, then freeze in a sealed food bag and label with the date and number of whites.

COMPILED BY: ROSE FOOKS. RECIPES AND PHOTOS: FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM

RICH CHOCOLATE TART

This would make a wonderful pud for an Easter feast.

PER SERVING
563 cals, 40g fat, 23g sat fat, 43g carbs

SERVES 12
PREP 30 MINS, PLUS CHILLING
COOK 50-55 MINS

For the pastry:

- **175g plain flour, plus extra for dusting**
- **25g cocoa powder**
- **50g icing sugar**
- **100g chilled unsalted butter, diced**
- **1 medium egg yolk**

For the filling:

- **150ml whole milk**
- **500ml double cream**
- **75g golden caster sugar**
- **300g dark chocolate, broken into small pieces**
- **2 medium eggs, beaten**
- **2tbsp amaretto (optional)**
- **8 crunchy amaretti biscuits, crushed**
- **Raspberries, to serve**

You will need:

- **23cm fluted tart tin, about 4cm deep**
- **Baking paper and baking beans**

1 For the pastry, put the flour, cocoa powder, icing sugar and butter in a food processor. Add the egg yolk and 1-2tbsp water, and pulse together to form a firm dough. Wrap in cling film and chill for 20 mins.

2 Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface, then use to line the tart tin. Chill for a further 20 mins.

3 Heat the oven to 180C Fan/Gas 6. Prick the pastry base several times with a fork. Line the pastry with a sheet of crumpled baking paper and beans, put on a baking tray and bake for 15 mins. Remove the paper and beans, and bake for a further 5 mins or until the pastry feels dry and sandy.

4 For the filling, gently heat the milk, cream and sugar together in a medium pan. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate, stirring until melted. Set aside to cool for 10 mins, then beat in the eggs and amaretto, if using.

5 Lower the oven temperature to 160C Fan/Gas 4. Carefully pour the filling into the case and scatter over the crushed amaretti biscuits. Bake for 30-35 mins, until the filling is mostly set with just a slight wobble in the centre. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Serve each slice with some raspberries.

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NIGHT *owls*

There was a comforting presence out there, and it was calling to her

Eleanor flung open her skylight and gulped in the cool air, trying to focus on the sensation of breathing, rather than the thoughts that came creeping across her mind when she tried to sleep.

It had been a hard year. During the days, she kept busy, but after dark her sadness was waiting.

A noise rang through the night… too-wit, too-woo! It sounded like an owl, but she'd never seen or heard one before. Comforted by the thought of the elusive creature, she returned to bed.

The next morning, she pulled out her bird guide and found the page about owls.

The 'too-wit, too-woo' sound is a male tawny owl calling out, and a female replying, she read.

She imagined the beautiful creatures sleeping high in the oaks all day, as she walked her mischievous puppy, Nutkin, below.

That night, she opened the window before the lonely thoughts had a chance to enter her mind. The night surrounded her and she listened.

After five peaceful minutes, the call came again. Once she'd heard it, she went to bed and slept better than she had in weeks.

After that, before turning in for the night, Eleanor opened her window to hear the owls. Then one night… nothing.

Eventually, she cupped her hands and blew on her thumb knuckles, the way she'd been taught at Brownies. It made a haunting 'too-wit' call.

A couple of seconds passed. Then, clearly through the night, she heard 'too-woo'.

Eleanor felt a shiver of excitement. There was still an owl out there and she was talking to it.

After that, she called to the owl every night, and it called back.

As the weeks passed, Eleanor wished she could see the owl as well as hear it.

One evening, she pulled on her jacket and found a torch. Nutkin ran around in excitement at the prospect of a bonus walk, but she offered him a biscuit instead and slipped outside alone.

In the dark, the wood felt magical. She called her owl sound hopefully, then stood frozen, waiting for a reply. Her heart pounded as if she'd run there.

In the dark, the wood felt magical

The response came almost instantly. Eleanor took a deep breath and walked deeper into the wood, towards the sound.

She pulled her coat tightly around her body, then shone her torch in sweeping arcs. Suddenly, the beam caught a cloaked human figure. She dropped the torch and screamed. Her legs urged her to run, but she'd never find her way without the torchlight, so she frantically scrambled to find it in the brambles.

'Are you OK?' asked the dark figure, just as Eleanor's fingers found her torch.

She shone the light and saw that the voice belonged to a cheerful-looking man in a garden beyond the fence. She'd walked through the woods to the houses on the other side.

'You gave me a fright,' spluttered Eleanor, beginning to giggle hysterically.

'And you gave me one!' grinned the man. 'Good job my heart is in fine shape. You certainly put it to work, stumbling out of the undergrowth like that.' He was holding a thermos flask and a steaming cup. 'I'm Alan, by the way.'

'I'm Eleanor. I was looking for an owl that I've befriended,' she confessed, blushing. There was something trustworthy about cheery Alan and his cup of tea.

'Is that right? That's why I'm out here too,' he replied. 'I hear that owl every night. I even call to it and it calls back. I'm quite fond of it, for something I've never seen.'

'I call to the owl too!' exclaimed Eleanor. 'It's amazing to speak to nature.'

Alan frowned, then cupped his hands to his mouth and blew. He was very good. It sounded just like the owl.

Eleanor cupped her own hands, and made her owl noise. Realisation dawned.

'So you were the owl all along?'

'And you were *my* owl?' asked Alan, looking amused.

'I thought I was communicating with an actual owl,' said Eleanor, feeling disappointed.

'The real owl probably stopped calling once it found a mate,' suggested Alan. 'There is plenty more wildlife in these woods though. I'm leading a walk to spot bats here next week. You're welcome to join us.'

Eleanor was surprised into silence for a moment. It was the last thing she'd expected from her dark walk in the woods, but maybe this was even better than glimpsing an owl. Perhaps meeting fellow local nature lovers was just what she needed.

'I'd love to,' she replied, feeling a rush of excitement.

The owl had found its mate, she decided. Maybe it was her turn next.

THE END

Mary Hudson, 2023

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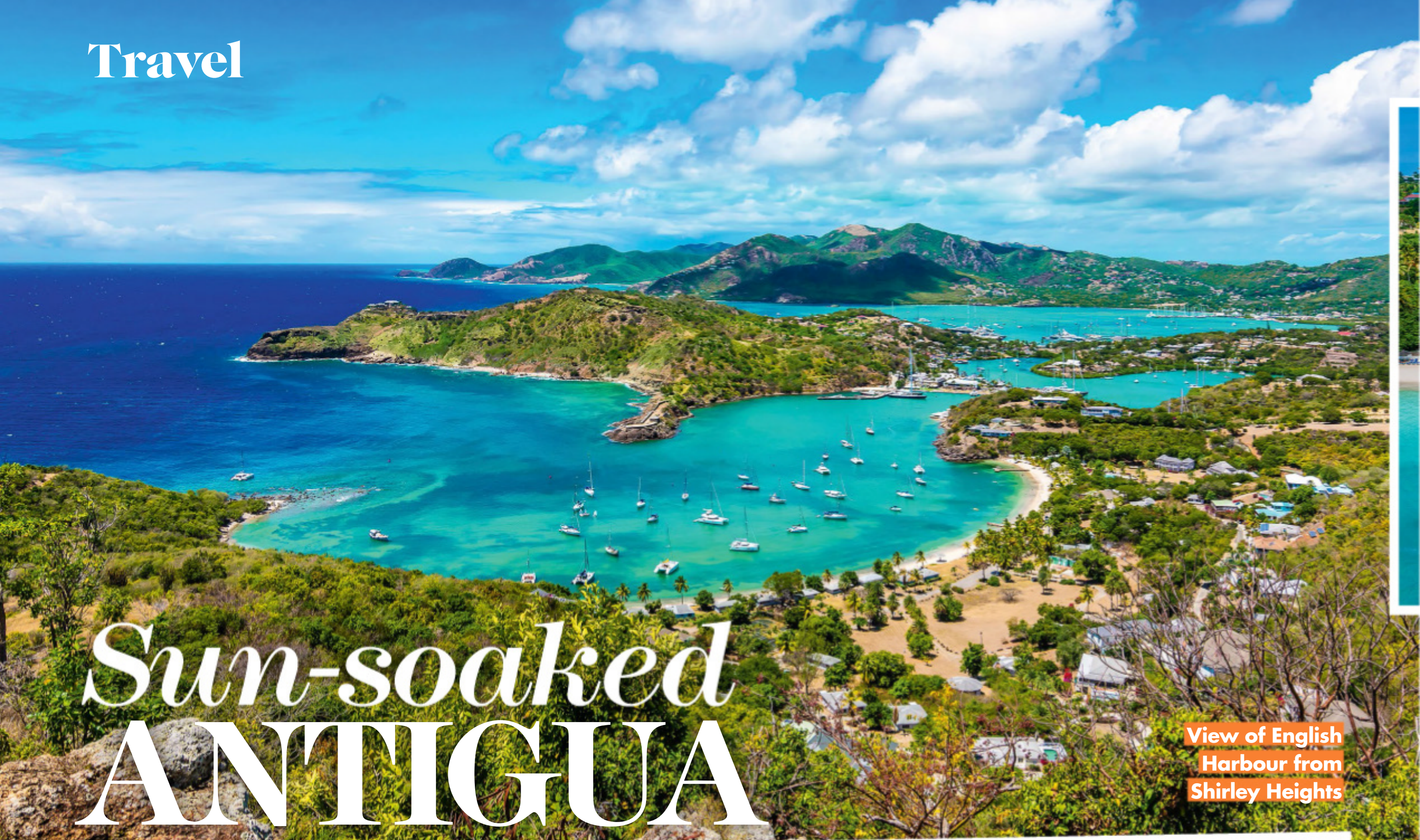


Sun-soaked ANTIGUA

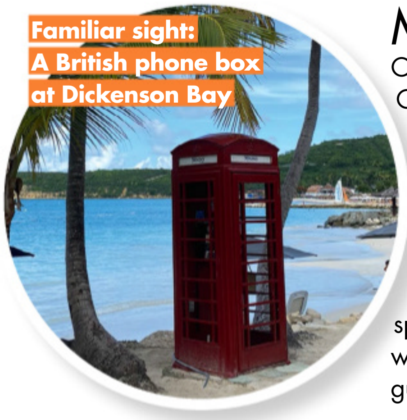
View of English Harbour from Shirley Heights

A trip to this Caribbean idyll offers a wealth of dazzling beaches and adventures

When an island can boast a beach for every day of the year – and each one has a mix of white sands, fringed by swaying palms and shimmering turquoise water – it would be rude not to make the most of them. And while simply lazing there with a cocktail in hand is tempting, the water has such an allure, it's hard to resist its siren call.

Swim in or sail on it, or simply gaze at it in wonder, the sea here is a thing of beauty. So, it's not difficult to see why this tropical paradise is known as 'the land of sea and sun'. It's also the nearest Caribbean isle to the UK, making it a top destination for Brits to holiday.

Boats and shops at Nelson's Dockyard



Familiar sight: A British phone box at Dickenson Bay

Marine life

One of the marine hotspots is Great Bird Island, about 3km north of Antigua. It has its own coral formations, where kayaking and snorkelling trips are available. It's private but is open to the public. We're taken by speedboat to its edge, where we pick up kayaks for a guided paddle among the lush mangroves. The size of around 10 football pitches, the island is fairly small, and the waters calm enough to circumnavigate without the need to be sea savvy. And you don't have to be super confident in the water, either, to go snorkelling in the surrounding coral reefs, which are full of tropical fish, including some impressively sized stingrays.

Thrilling views

If it's views you're after, you can't do better than a trip to Shirley Heights, a restored military lookout and gun battery that sits roughly 490ft above the stunning English Harbour and Falmouth Harbour – strategic ports in the 18th century. It's particularly special at sunset, when the sky turns crimson and the lights twinkle below. Every Sunday evening (4-10pm), it's a top place to party. Tourists and residents mingle for a drink, a barbecue and live music from local bands playing pop tunes with a Caribbean feel.

Shirley Heights is one of the stop-offs on a three-hour hike to the Pillars of Hercules – a towering row of limestone rocks, eroded by centuries of wind, rain and waves. En route, you'll wander through white

Couples-only retreat, Sandals Grande Antigua

Best for HIKERS

Pass through stunning bays and take in views of historic buildings on a Pillars of Hercules hiking adventure. From US$118 per person; islandroutes.com

butterflies and cacti, while enjoying the sea views.

Cultural heritage site

At the English Harbour Marina, you'll find Nelson's Dockyard, with splendid fully restored 18th- and 19th-century buildings and glorious boats, plus a museum. There are modern amenities too, such as art galleries, gift shops and restaurants.

It sits within the wider Nelson's Dockyard National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is dotted with forts and is named after Lord Nelson, in honour of the years he spent in Antigua.

Romantic resort

One of the island's best-known beaches is Dickenson Bay, and it is here, on a two-mile stretch of sand, that you'll find Sandals Grande Antigua – an all-inclusive, couples-only retreat, voted year after year the Caribbean's most romantic resort. It's the ultimate place to unwind, lounging on the beach or chilling by one of the resort's 11 pools surrounded by lush, tropical gardens.

For the more adventurous, there are many water-based activities included, from boat trips and paddleboarding to swimming, sailing, snorkelling and diving.

FIND OUT MORE

Stays at Sandals Grande Antigua are all-inclusive and start at £1,935 per person for a seven-night stay for two, including return flights with British Airways from London Gatwick and resort transfers. To book through Sandals Resorts' UK tour operator, Unique Caribbean Holidays Ltd (UCHL), visit sandals.co.uk or call 0800 597 0002.

WORDS: TANYA PEAREY. PHOTOS: GETTY. PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF WRITING BUT SUBJECT TO CHANGE, SO ALWAYS CHECK

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On this superb holiday we stay in Sant Agata Sui Due Golfi, a delightful village with pavement cafes, restaurants and shops. The Grand Hotel Hermitage is a family-owned hotel and is set in its own gardens full of olive and fruit trees. The hotel facilities include a sun filled terrace and swimming pool, pool, a restaurant serving classic Sorrentine and Italian cuisine and a lounge bar. From the restaurant and its terrace there are stunning views across the Bay of Naples to Vesuvius. The bedrooms are en-suite and have a balcony or terrace, satellite TV, free Wi-Fi and air-conditioning (available from early June to mid September). The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle bus from the hotel to the centre of Sorrento.

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Shore THING

Stitch this simple coastal cushion decorated with fish appliqués

TESTED BY US so they work for you

YOU WILL NEED

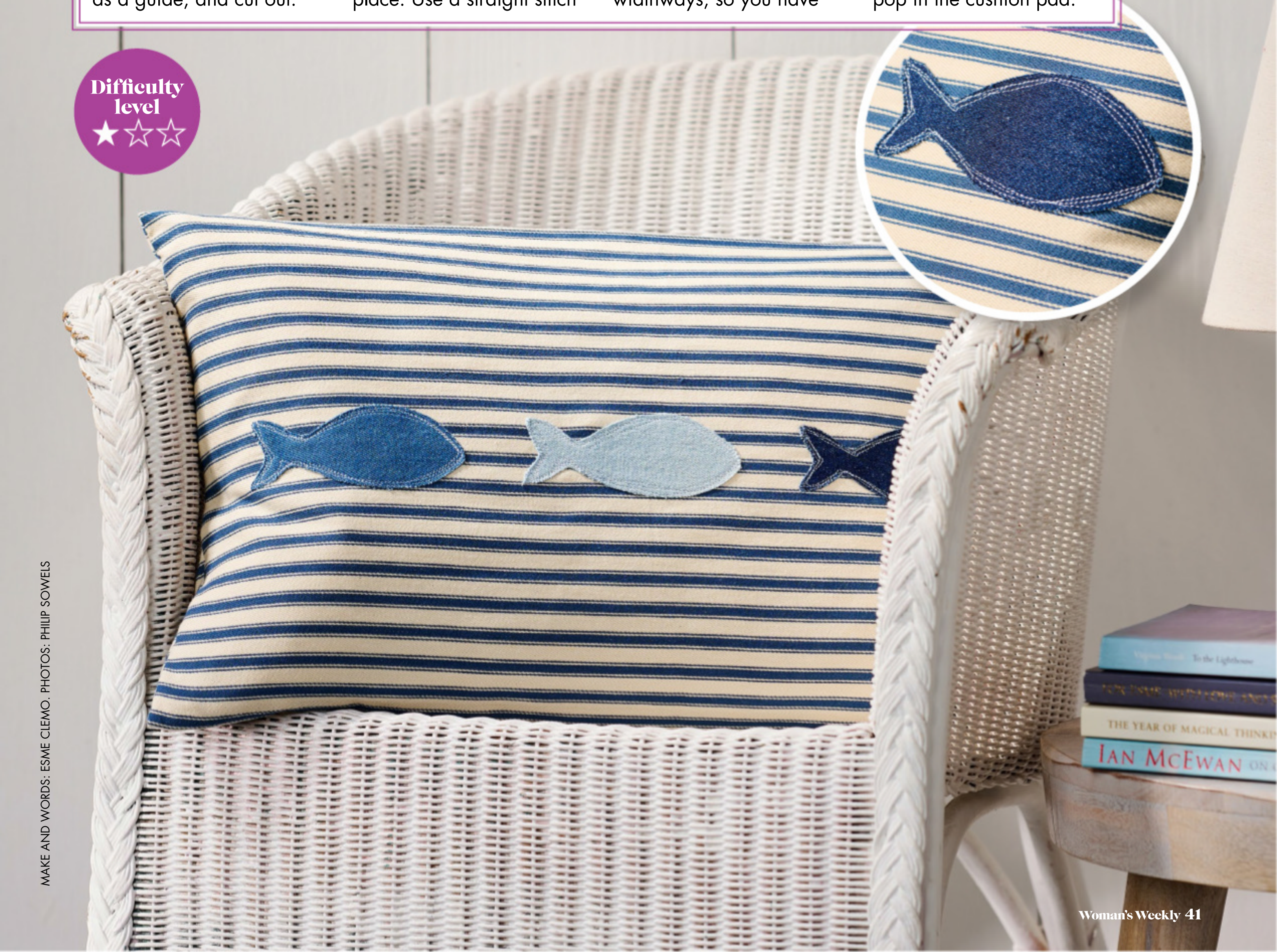
- **Paper and pencil**
- **Bondaweb**
- **Denim scrap fabric**
- **53x80cm blue ticking fabric**
- **White sewing thread**
- **Ruler and scissors**
- **30x50cm cushion pad**

1 Draw a fish template on paper, using our photo as a guide, and cut out. Fuse the Bondaweb to the wrong side of the denim scrap pieces, following the manufacturer's instructions. Draw around the template onto the paper backing of the Bondaweb and cut out three denim fish.

2 Arrange the fish appliqués in the centre of the blue ticking fabric widthways and fuse in place. Use a straight stitch (and a free-motion foot if you have a sewing machine), and sew around each appliqué three times. It doesn't need to be neat, as this adds to the beachy look.

3 Turn the top and bottom edges of the fabric under by 1cm, then 2cm, and topstitch to secure. Fold the blue ticking fabric widthways, so you have a 30x50cm rectangle in the centre with the appliqué fish front and centre, then fold the top and bottom pieces over the top with right sides together to form an envelope. Stitch along the side edges with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Turn right sides out and pop in the cushion pad.

Difficulty level
★☆☆



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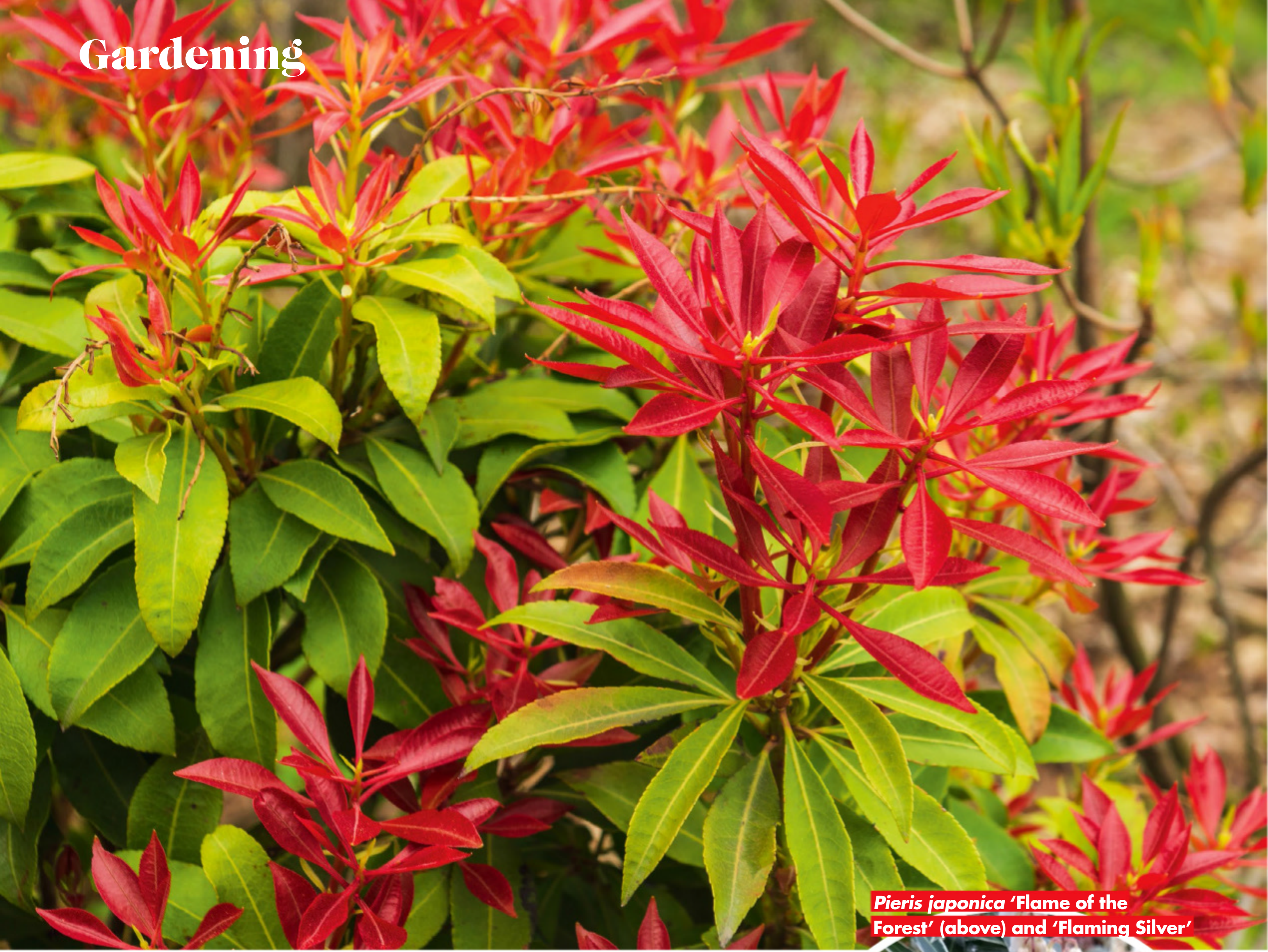
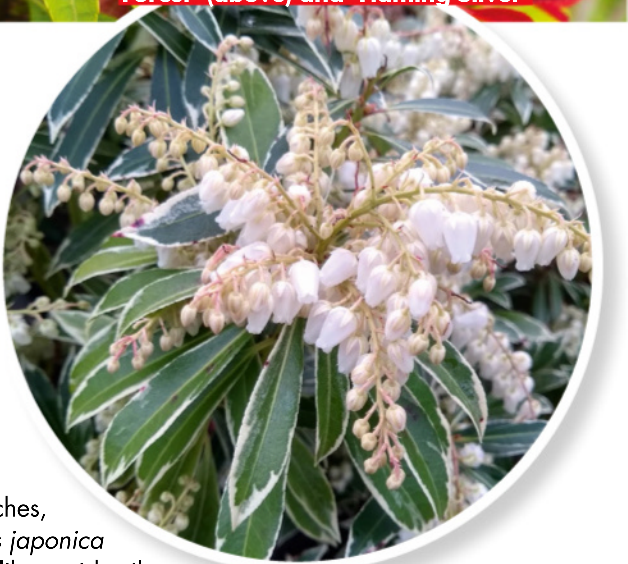


Pieris japonica **'Flame of the Forest' (above) and 'Flaming Silver'**



Blossoming BEAUTIES

Create a gorgeous display with some stunning shrubs this spring

New-season awakening

Watch your garden transform from drab to dreamy with shrubs that burst into blossom this month. These delights are easy to grow and versatile, adding richness to beds with their structure and height, and creating frothy focal points. Some can be trained against walls and fences or snuggled up together to form a hedge. Underplant with a sweep of bulbs and ground-cover plants.

Fragrant lily-of-the-valley bush

Named after the exquisite white flowers that dangle from the tips of the branches, evergreen *Pieris japonica* is a show-off. It likes acid soil and a semi-shaded, sheltered spot, where its juvenile red- or bronze-coloured leaves are protected from frost.

For borders, 'Forest Flame' (HxS 4x2.5m) is a sparkling choice. Its creamy bells contrast with new leaves that unfurl red and turn coral, then cream and finally dark green. For high impact in a small space, 'Flaming Silver' (HxS 1-1.5x0.5-1m) teams the same coloured bells with fresh scarlet foliage that matures to green with silver edges.

'Pulborough Scarlet'

Flowering currant

Ribes sanguineum is one of the earliest shrubs to bloom. This old-fashioned favourite produces masses of bell-like flowers in pink, crimson or purple. It's a low-maintenance, bee-friendly choice for the border or as a hedge – just prune back flowered stems in early summer. Try 'Pulborough Scarlet' (HxS 2.5x2.5m) or compact 'Koja' (HxS 1.5x2.5m).

Classy camellias

Evergreen camellias are a restrained, elegant presence for much of the year. But all eyes are on them during early spring. Their sumptuous single or double flowers come in rich reds, a myriad of pinks (pale shell to shocking), and whipped cream to starched white. Up close, you can marvel at the varied arrangements of their silky petals – smooth or ruffled, dense or open. Varieties that flower in March include:

✣ 'Chatsworth Belle', with intricate layers of icing-pink petals (HxS 3x2m).

✣ 'Jury's Yellow', which is cream with ruffled lemon centres (HxS 2.5x4m).

✣ 'Ruby Wedding', which is currant red and densely packed (HxS 1.5x2.5m).

'Chatsworth Belle'

'Jury's Yellow'

'Ruby Wedding'

Ornamental quince

This hardy deciduous shrub (Chaenomeles) has thorny branches generously studded with bowl-shaped blooms in spring. Unfussy and low-maintenance, it thrives in partial shade or sun, and in any moist, well-drained soil. As a bonus, the aromatic, green-yellow fruits that follow on from the flowers can be used to make delicious jelly – or leave as a feast for the birds. Standout varieties include 'Crimson and Gold' (HxS 1.5x2.5m) and white 'Nivalis' (HxS 2.5x4m).

'Nivalis' blossoms from March and the fruit is ready to harvest in autumn

WORDS: CHRIS MORLEY. PHOTOS: ALAMY, GAP PHOTOS, GETTY

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Another door OPENS

Judy needed to take on a fresh challenge in life – but what?

Tap tap tap... The sound pulled Judy away from thoughts such as 'What am I doing here?' and 'Is it too late to go back?'

Back to her old life. Back to before all of this. Could something be exciting and terrifying at the same time? Today proved that, yes, it could.

The thing that was happening had started small, like so many things do.

It began with a bargain or two. Judy had always been one for a bargain.

* * *

'Why does our shopping have yellow labels, Mummy?' her twins Clare and Jack would ask loudly at the checkout. Judy would do what was now called 'styling it out'.

'All the best food has yellow labels, kids. And only the best for you.'

In truth, the yellow-label food *was* good. Just near its sell-by date, that was all.

In recent years, since the kids had flown the nest, many years after their father had, Judy often felt she was past her own sell-by date. She'd not long retired from her job as an art technician at a local college and was between opportunities. There was more she could be doing, she was sure, but what exactly?

What she did best was pootling about, in truth. Popping into town for coffee, meeting her friend Sue at the weekend, who still worked full time (and had the disposable income to show for it), picking books up in the library, browsing in charity shops.

Judy had discovered the wonder of charity shops once she retired and her time had become more elastic.

She'd pick up cheap vinyl records that she hadn't seen since her misspent youth, and would pogo about her living room with her curtains closed. She'd collect ornaments that would gather dust, but looked pretty, especially pieces of coloured glass that caught the sunlight on the windowsill. And she also bought clothes. Quite a few clothes. Not always dresses or coats, but accessories and costume jewellery too.

She was like a magpie, honing in, often on sparkly things, and taking them home to her nest.

She often felt past her sell-by date

When you bought things in a charity shop, she discovered, you could experiment with looks. One day she'd be a middle-aged goth clothed head to toe in black but for a crimson choker. She'd cinch in her waist with a deep black belt, and wear big black boots under her ankle-length skirt. The next day she'd present as a smart-casual woman about town in chinos and a tailored jacket, with her favourite diamanté brooch from the 1960s attached to the lapel.

She loved it. Especially now she wasn't tied to her jeans, sweatshirt, plimsolls and apron ensemble that she used to wear to work.

'That's an interesting look,' Sue said one Saturday as she sipped her skinny frappé. Judy wasn't sure if she was being judged, appraised or admired.

Sue, a deputy head at the school where Judy had worked, liked her fashion to be high-end and classy. Even at the weekends, she looked smart and sleek in a belted coat, ballerina flats and capri pants.

'D'you like it?'

That particular day, Judy had gone full boho. She wore a scarf in her hair, several strands of beads, a flowing skirt over cowboy boots. She *thought* she had pulled it off. No one had stared, or giggled, not this time. Not like when she hadn't pulled off early Madonna – the fingerless lace gloves had been a step too far.

'Where's it from?' Sue asked.

Judy gave the names of her favourite charity shops – she especially liked the animal rescue store, and the one for the homeless. Not only did they raise money for what she considered to be worthwhile causes, but they were quiet havens, Aladdin's caves of colour, variety and quirkiness. Little gems would be hidden among beige cardigans and off-white shirts that had seen better days.

'Like I say, interesting,' Sue replied.

Judy wondered if she would be more interesting in Sue's eyes if she had named an on-trend website as the source for her outfit.

Still, Sue's loss was Judy's gain. She could rummage for ages, barely being disturbed by other customers, pulling out treasures to rehome.

She'd pick up debonair hats and extravagantly patterned silk scarves.

Once home, she'd while away an afternoon striking poses, mixing and matching, discarding outfits on her bed.

It was great fun. And almost her own little secret. There was no way Sue would spill the beans.

* * *

Well, it *was* a secret, until one day she heard Clare's voice at the bottom of the stairs while she was just about to transform from being a 1950s vamp, making sure she didn't smear lippy on her purple frock, into casual wear that would take her through to her night-time cocoa.

'Hey, Mum, I'm home!'

Judy had always loved the fact her grown-up offspring kept their keys and let themselves in whenever they wished. They were still so close, without living in each other's pockets.

And what had she got to hide? Nothing. Not usually.

'Wow, Mum, you look amazing! You going on a date or something?'

The kids had always been useless at knocking before entering her bedroom and, in turn, Judy had been soft on them.

'Don't be daft,' Judy said. 'A date? After all this time? Nope. I'm just…' What was she just doing? She blushed. Playing at dressing up? Like when she was six, clip-clopping around in her own mum's stilettos and 60s minis?

'Can I take a photo?'

Well, at least her daughter had asked permission. And why not? She may not look a million dollars, but she felt OK. In fact, she was enjoying herself. And she'd even found her mum's high heels tucked away in a suitcase in the loft to give her a bit of height, and the outfit some oomph.

'Go on then.' Judy turned to Clare's phone and smiled. She could always look at the photos then ask her daughter to delete them, couldn't she?

'Where did you get the dress, Mum? Can I try it on? It's gorgeous.'

The dress Judy had just been about to unfasten was purple satin. It had a sweetheart neckline and a full, netted skirt. It reached calf length, and was very swishy. It looked the business with a pillbox hat and a shiny patent handbag that opened and closed with a satisfactory click. Inside there was even a mirror and comb.

There was no going back now

'Course, love.' Judy told her daughter where she'd bought it.

'If you grab something else to try on, we could take a mother and daughter selfie.'

Clare was of that generation. Posing, snapping and posting. It all came so naturally.

Judy took some persuading, but eventually she slipped into her all-time favourite – the middle-aged goth number – she didn't even need to change her lippy for that.

In the meantime, her daughter shrugged out of her familiar jeans and zipped herself into the purple dress, pulling the waist really tight with a waspie belt Judy offered her.

'Can I post the photos, Mum? On Instagram? It'll make a change from all the cakes.'

Clare made gravity-defying celebration cakes for a living and had a huge following on Instagram, the workings of which were a mystery to Judy.

What harm could it do? A few people might see her, then the moment would pass and it would be back to cakes.

'I'll say where the outfits come from, shall I?'

Judy nodded, trying to remember exactly what came from where.

* * *

That was when the small thing, the dressing-up thing, became something bigger.

Judy had no idea Clare had so many followers locally. Even among the staff and volunteers in charity shops.

The next time she popped into town, her favourite shop was chock-a-block with people browsing or handing in their donations.

'You're Judy, aren't you?' A voice said from behind a big bag of clothes.

Judy was surprised she was recognised. She thought she looked pretty incognito that day in a nifty £2 Panama hat, a white shirt and a man's tweed jacket.

Was it a good thing that someone knew who she was?

'We can't thank you enough for your support. You're style personified, and you're doing us the power of good. Look, people everywhere. Our takings have doubled since your daughter's been posting you in your outfits and tagging us. You're a great influence.'

Judy couldn't believe it. She looked around again. The place was buzzing. The quiet little shop was no more. She felt a bit sad, it was like *her* shop had gone, but she was happy too that more funds were being raised.

And now there was this.

Tap tap tap…

It was time. Her heart pitter-pattered, but there was no going back. She checked her lippy, straightened her frock, tipped her hat… Then she threw back the curtains, revealing her window display of mannequins dressed stylishly and quirkily in clothes she'd found in the store. There was a goth, a 60s outfit, and a male mannequin in a suave suit.

The sign she'd painted nestled in the corner – *Curated by Judy*.

She could hear the assembled crowd clap and cheer, and smiled for the cameras – even the local press had turned up.

Was that Sue at the front, in a hat that looked suspiciously like the one Judy had seen for sale a couple of days ago, right here?

Judy waved at her friend, and Sue had the grace to look embarrassed.

Then the doors were opened and the queue of customers snaked in.

The manager had invited Judy to join their team and she and the other volunteers had transformed the place over the last couple of weeks. Beige and white, which of course had their place, were there still, but colour and vibrancy dominated. The change was phenomenal.

She patted down her own outfit – it had taken some choosing. She'd gone for practical today, a block-print tunic over leggings and comfortable patent red boots.

About half an hour later, she managed to take a sip from a mug of tea, wondering how she'd gone from bargain hunter extraordinaire to the oldest influencer in town. And all for a good cause.

As one door shuts another opens, Judy thought, standing to greet new customers when the doorbell tinkled.

THE END

Fran Tracey, 2023

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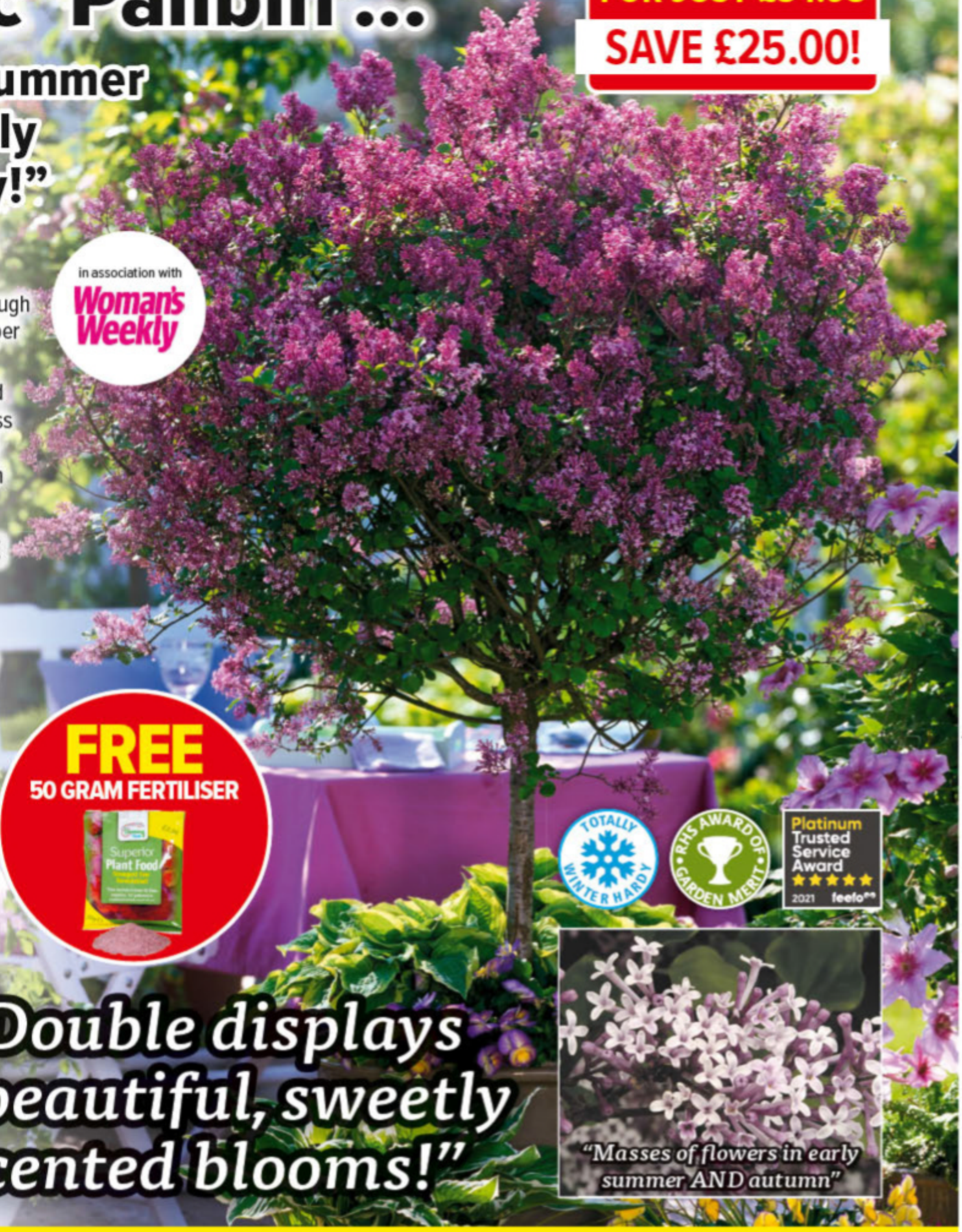
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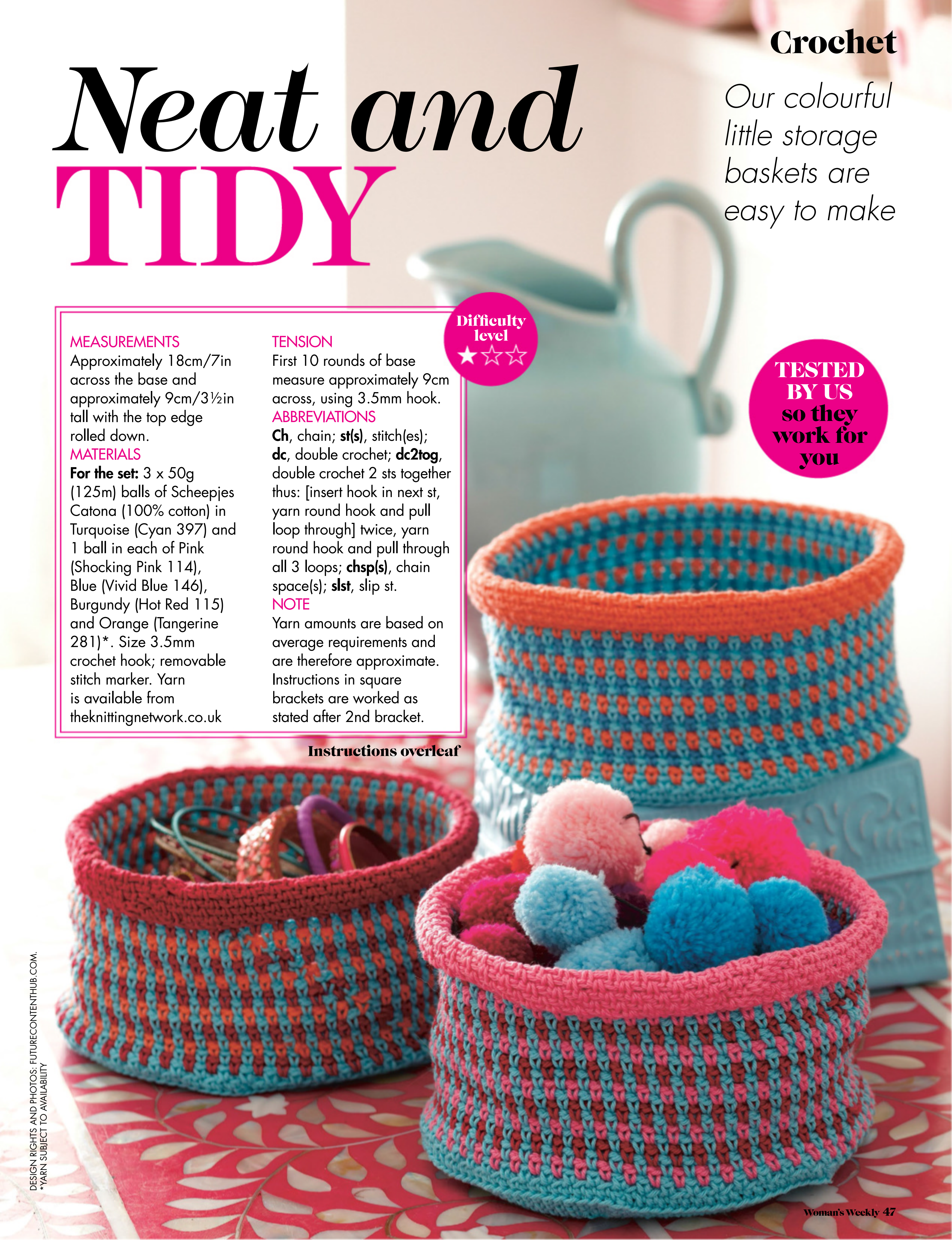

Difficulty level ★☆☆

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MEASUREMENTS
Approximately 18cm/7in across the base and approximately 9cm/3½in tall with the top edge rolled down.

MATERIALS
For the set: 3 x 50g (125m) balls of Scheepjes Catona (100% cotton) in Turquoise (Cyan 397) and 1 ball in each of Pink (Shocking Pink 114), Blue (Vivid Blue 146), Burgundy (Hot Red 115) and Orange (Tangerine 281)*. Size 3.5mm crochet hook; removable stitch marker. Yarn is available from theknittingnetwork.co.uk

TENSION
First 10 rounds of base measure approximately 9cm across, using 3.5mm hook.

ABBREVIATIONS
Ch, chain; **st(s)**, stitch(es); **dc**, double crochet; **dc2tog**, double crochet 2 sts together thus: [insert hook in next st, yarn round hook and pull loop through] twice, yarn round hook and pull through all 3 loops; **chsp(s)**, chain space(s); **slst**, slip st.

NOTE
Yarn amounts are based on average requirements and are therefore approximate. Instructions in square brackets are worked as stated after 2nd bracket.

Instructions overleaf

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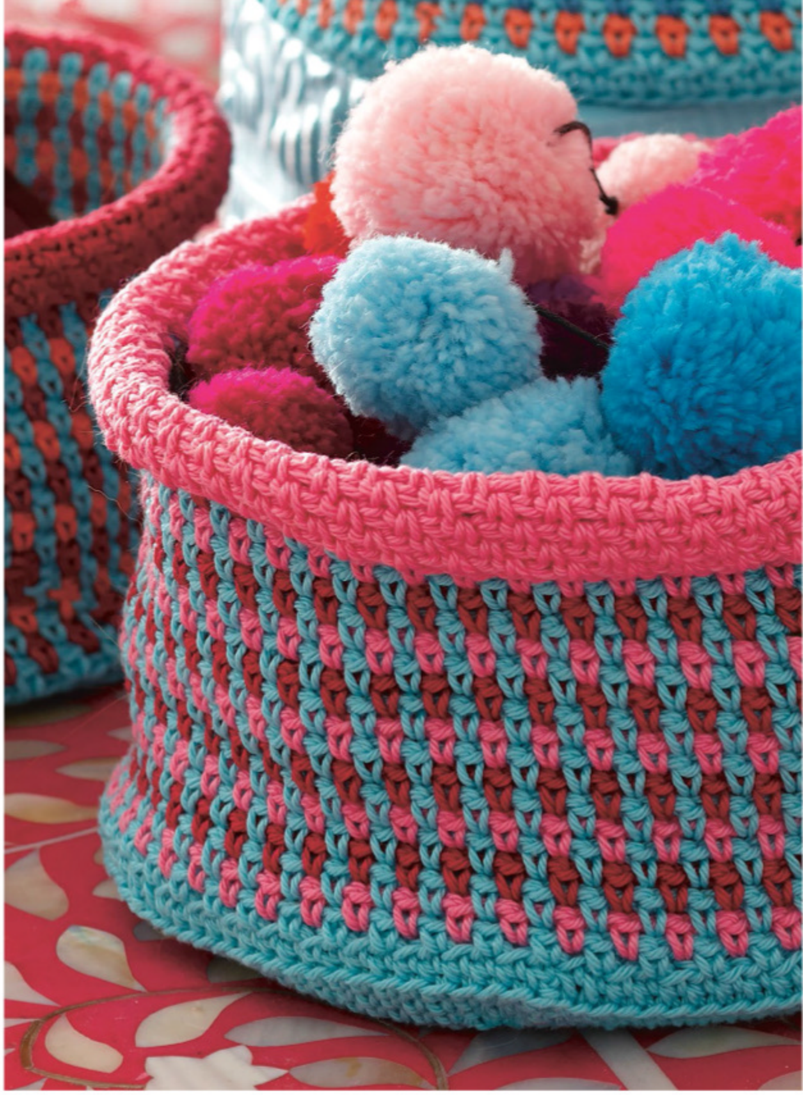
*YARN SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



ORANGE BASKET

1st round: With 3.5mm hook and Turquoise, wind yarn round index finger of left hand to form a ring, insert hook into ring, yarn round hook and pull loop through, 1ch (does not count as a st throughout), work 6dc into ring, slst in first dc – 6 dc.

Mark end st of last round with st marker, and move marker up at end of every round.

2nd round: [2dc in next st] 6 times – 12 dc.

3rd round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in next dc] 6 times – 18 dc.

4th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 2 dc] 6 times – 24 dc.

5th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 3 dc] 6 times – 30 dc.

6th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 4 dc] 6 times – 36 dc.

7th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 5 dc] 6 times – 42 dc.

8th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 6 dc] 6 times – 48 dc.

9th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 7 dc] 6 times – 54 dc.

10th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 8 dc] 6 times – 60 dc.

11th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 9 dc] 6 times – 66 dc.

12th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 10 dc] 6 times – 72 dc.

13th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 11 dc] 6 times – 78 dc.

14th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 12 dc] 6 times – 84 dc.

15th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 13 dc] 6 times – 90 dc.

16th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 14 dc] 6 times – 96 dc.

17th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 15 dc] 6 times – 102 dc.

18th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 16 dc] 6 times – 108 dc.

19th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc in each of next 17 dc] 6 times – 114 dc.

20th round: [2dc in next dc, 1dc each of next 18 dc] 6 times, slst in first dc – 120 dc.

Base is complete, Continue with sides.

21st round: Working in back loops only, work 1ch (does not count as a st), [dc2tog, 1dc in each of next 18 dc] 6 times, slst in first st – 114 dc.

22nd round: 1ch (does not count as a st), 1dc in st at base of ch, [1ch, miss next dc, 1dc in next dc] to last dc, 1ch, miss last dc, slst in first st – 57 dc and 57 chsps.

Break off Turquoise. Join Orange in first chsp.

Remove st marker as it is no longer needed.

**** 23rd round:** 1ch (does not count as a st), 1dc in same chsp, [1ch, miss next dc, 1dc in next chsp] to last dc, 1ch, miss last dc, slst in first st.

Break off Orange.

Join Turquoise in first chsp.

24th round: As 23rd round.

Break off Turquoise.

Join Blue in first chsp.

25th round: As 23rd round.

Break off Blue.

Join Turquoise in first chsp.

26th round: As 23rd round.

Break off Turquoise.

Join Orange in first chsp. **

Work from ** to ** 4 times more, then work 23rd round again.

Continue in Orange for top edge.

Next round: Slst in next chsp, 1ch (does not count as a st), 1dc in same chsp, [1ch, miss next dc, 1dc in next chsp] to last dc, 1ch, miss last dc, slst in first st.

Repeat last round a further 4 times. Fasten off.

Allow top edge to roll onto right side.

BURGUNDY BASKET

Work as Orange Basket, using Burgundy instead of Orange and Orange instead of Blue.

PINK BASKET

Work as Orange Basket, using Pink instead of Orange and Burgundy instead of Blue.

✣ **If you have any knitting and crochet questions, please contact Knitting Editor Lynne at lynne.rowe@futurenet.com**

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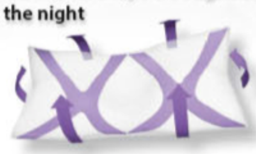

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The kissing BRIDGE

Becca was sure her father was in terrible trouble – but would she ever find him?

THE STORY SO FAR: For the past four years, Becca Stone has been living with her father Adrian, helping him get over the loss of her mother. Out of the blue, Adrian suggests she moves into a houseshare with her former boyfriend Sam, who is still a good friend. As soon as she leaves, Adrian takes early retirement and announces that he's off to Rome. He sends photos, and in one Becca sees the reflection of an unknown woman in his hotel-room mirror. When she asks Adrian about her, he hangs up and won't answer her calls. In a panic, she books a seat on the next flight to Rome and Sam joins her, as he knows the city well and has family there. They retrace Adrian's steps and a waitress tells them that she last saw him with a woman who is known to con vulnerable men.

Becca looked at her reflection in the mirror. No amount of make-up could conceal the dark circles under her eyes or the puffiness of her eyelids.

What little sleep she'd had was peppered with nightmares about her dad, and in them he was as broken as he'd been after her mum's death.

The worst of it was knowing that this time she might not be able to put him back together.

There was a knock on the door and she hurried to answer it. She'd texted her dad with details of her hotel, in case he ever read her messages, and for one crazy moment she thought it was him.

Her face fell when she saw it was Sam.

'Oh,' she said glumly. Her shoulders slumped.

'You OK?' he asked.

'I'm fine,' she said. 'I thought you might be Dad.'

'Ah, love,' Sam said, and the sympathy in his voice almost made her cry. 'Maybe today will be the day we find him. It's too soon to give up hope. Let's have breakfast and head straight out,' he said. 'The more ground we cover, the better.'

'I'm not very hungry.'

'You've hardly eaten anything since we got here. You must have something.'

They sat at a table for two and Becca sipped her coffee and picked at a pastry. It was delicious, but she had to force it down.

His voice almost made her cry

'You'll love the Castel Sant'Angelo,' he said. 'We'll have to go over the river to get there.'

'What makes you think he'll go there?'

'Just a hunch. He seemed to be interested when I was talking about it and it's my favourite place.'

She couldn't remember what he'd said about it, but it must be special.

'Finish your pastry,' he instructed. 'Starving yourself isn't going to help.'

He smiled and she laughed. It was just the sort of thing her dad would say. He didn't think anything should be done on an empty stomach.

'That's better,' Sam said. 'It's good to see you smile, Becca.'

* * *

It was warmer than the previous day, but overcast and threatening rain as they joined the queue outside the Castel Sant'Angelo.

It was so impressive that she stopped thinking about her dad for a bit before remembering why they were there and began scanning the people for some sight of him.

'Do you think he's here?'

Sam shrugged. 'Maybe. Even if he's not, we might strike lucky and find someone that remembers him.'

'It's worth a try.'

'Send me that photo of your dad. I want you to look around, while I ask the staff if anyone recognises him.'

'Sounds like a plan.'

'I'll meet you at Le Terrazze restaurant in two hours, OK? Don't only look for your dad, Becca. Enjoy it while you're here. There's a lot to see.'

'I will,' she said.

'Make sure you see the mausoleum on the first floor.'

'Mausoleum?'

'This place was originally built as a mausoleum for the emperor Hadrian.'

'The guy that built the wall?'

'That's the one,' Sam grinned. 'Your dad would want to know about that.'

When he'd gone, Becca began her search of the castle, keeping her eye on the other visitors until she reached the third floor and saw him standing in front of a painting.

'Dad!' She ran up and grabbed his arm as relief washed over her.

The guy turned round and shook her hand away. He was nothing like her father and the disappointment was crushing.

'I'm so sorry,' she said.

Woman's Weekly
SERIAL
PART
THREE

'I thought you were my father.' She moved on, embarrassed. Next time, if there was a next time, she'd be more careful.

Once this was all over, she really wanted to come back and see the city properly.

When she finally arrived at the restaurant at the top of the castle, she looked around and saw Sam coming towards her.

'Any luck?' she asked.

'I'm afraid not. I take it you didn't have any either.'

'No,' she said. 'Not a sign.'

'I booked us a table. It's this way.'

She followed him and he held her chair for her. It was an old-fashioned and oddly touching gesture.

'Don't tell me you're not hungry, Becca.'

'I won't,' she said.

'So, what do you think of the view?'

'Is that St Peter's Basilica? Wow! We're that close to Vatican City. Amazing.'

* * *

When the waiter brought their food, Sam didn't show him the photo straight away.

'I'll ask him when we've eaten,' he said. 'I know you. If he doesn't remember seeing him, you'll worry. If he does, you'll worry. Right now we don't know, so eat up and enjoy.'

The food was good and Becca ate her first proper meal since her dad had vanished.

'Waiters tend to recall people,' Sam said. 'And I can't imagine Adrian not having a meal up here. He would have loved the view.'

Becca found herself sharing his optimism. Her dad was a friendly guy, who tended to make a good impression on people. Why wouldn't he be remembered?

She'd never been out for a meal with him when he didn't strike up a conversation with a stranger. It seemed to come so easily to him. She hated to think that someone had taken advantage of that.

When the waiter brought their coffees after the meal, Sam asked him about the photo.

'No, I have not seen him, but I can ask around. May I take the phone?'

'Yes,' Sam said. 'Thanks.'

He was gone for five minutes before returning with a younger waiter.

'I remember him,' the other guy said, as he handed Sam his phone. 'A very charming man with a beautiful woman. He told me he was going to propose to the lady on the Ponte Sant'Angelo.'

'Propose?' Becca cried.

'They were very much in love,' the waiter went on uncertainly. 'Perhaps I shouldn't have said.'

'Thank you,' Sam said. 'Please don't worry.'

The waiter cast Becca an anxious look. The poor guy thought he'd spoken out of turn and she wanted to reassure him.

'Thank you,' she said. 'It's my father. We are here to surprise him. We thought he'd be here today, but we must have got it wrong. We'll act surprised when he tells us.'

She felt guilty for telling a lie

She felt guilty for telling a lie, but the relief on the waiter's face was worth it.

He smiled. 'Then it is happy news, yes?'

'Yes,' she said.

'He told me he had a daughter. *La ostetrica*. That is you?'

'Yes,' Sam said. 'Becca delivers babies.'

'Now we know it was definitely my dad,' Becca said. 'He always tells people about his midwife daughter.'

'That's because he's so proud of you.'

Becca was suddenly overcome with emotion. 'Everyone has been so kind.'

'It's a very friendly city,' Sam said. 'Which explains why your dad might have been easily taken in, but I can't imagine him being so besotted that he'd propose to someone he only just met. Are you ready to walk over the bridge? I'll introduce you to the angels.'

* * *

As they made their way slowly across the bridge Sam told her the names of each of the statues of the 10 angels.

'You know a lot about it,' she said distractedly. Right now she couldn't care less what the angels were called, stunning as they were. She simply wanted to find her dad before it was too late.

'It's a special place for my family. Dad proposed to my mum here.'

'This is the Kissing Bridge?' It came back to her now. 'The one you told Dad about? Of course!'

The view along the river was something else, and it was a perfectly romantic place for a proposal, but only for someone truly in love, which she couldn't believe her dad really was.

Besotted maybe. Conned. Out of his depth. Panic began to well up inside her.

'Did I put that idea in his head? I'm sorry, Becca.'

'Don't be. You can't possibly think that you're to blame for what's happened.'

A fine rain began to fall and Sam produced an umbrella from his backpack.

'Bunch up,' he said. 'We can share it.'

She moved closer to him and even the raindrops on the water made it seem special somehow.

'If anyone is to blame, it's

Continued overleaf

me,' she said, shivering. 'I should have realised he was still vulnerable. I should…'

Sam cut her off by kissing her and, for a moment, she forgot herself before pulling away.

'I'm sorry,' he said. 'I don't know why I did that.'

She pressed her mouth where his lips had touched. Her reaction to his kiss was as unexpected as the kiss itself. Now she had a whole raft of new feelings to sort out. But she didn't know where to begin. It was bad enough worrying about her dad without this!

'Honestly, Becca,' he whispered. 'I'm truly sorry. This place always gets to me, but it's no excuse. It won't happen again, I promise.'

He was clearly upset and she didn't want him to be.

'You had to shut me up somehow, Sam,' she said with a laugh. 'I was getting hysterical.'

He looked relieved. 'Yes,' he said. 'It was that or throw you in the river!'

'*Scusi! Scusi!*'

They turned to see the young waiter they'd spoken to earlier hurrying towards them.

'I have remembered something,' he said. 'They were excited about their plans. They had booked tickets for the Pantheon today, and tomorrow for the Colosseum and the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme. Does that help?'

Becca hugged him. 'More than you'll ever know,' she said with tears running down her face. 'Thank you.'

* * *

It was too late to go to the Pantheon that day, but Sam booked tickets for the Colosseum online as soon as they got back to the hotel. They headed there the following morning.

It had been splendid going past on the Vespa, but now, standing outside, Becca could see how imposing it was.

'I was going to tell you to keep looking, like yesterday,' Sam said, laughing as she stood on tiptoes to try and see as far as possible. 'But I don't have to.'

'He's here somewhere, isn't he?' she said.

'Yes, he is,' Sam said.

Once inside, they saw the permanent exhibit and how the Colosseum used to look. It was a fascinating glimpse into history and Becca thought about how much her dad would enjoy being here.

No wonder they called this the Eternal City.

'There are so many people,' she said as they moved along. 'I thought it would be quiet at this time of year.'

'It's never quiet,' Sam said. 'No matter how many times I come here, I never get used to the atmosphere. I always feel as if I can hear the echo of thousands of people cheering. Or is that just me?'

'No,' she said. 'The babble of the visitors' voices seems immense. If you close your eyes, it can't be much different to how it felt in the days of the gladiators. It gives you a strange feeling inside.'

> 'I think I see him… with a woman'

'I'm glad you feel it too,' he murmured.

Of course she did. They'd always been in tune with each other. It was such a shame things had ended between them.

They paused every so often to look around, but it seemed so hopeless.

Then Sam touched her arm. 'Becca. I think I see him.'

'Where?'

'With a woman in a black coat,' he said. 'She's wearing a bright blue scarf. They look as if they're leaving.'

Still she couldn't see them until Sam put his arm around her and pressed his face against hers, so he could point in exactly the right direction.

'I see him!'

'Come on!'

It seemed wrong to hurry round this place, where people were walking slowly or stopping to gaze and reflect, but no one took any notice of them. Soon they were outside the ancient amphitheatre, making their way through more tourists.

'Perhaps they didn't come out,' Sam said.

Becca spun round, looking this way and that, searching for her father. He couldn't have simply disappeared.

Suddenly she spotted him and the woman, their arms linked, walking together. She felt sick knowing what she did about the woman.

'Sam! That way!'

'They're heading for the metro!'

Sam grabbed her hand and they began to run after them.

They were too far away to shout and, as Adrian entered the metro, Sam stopped.

'This is silly,' he said. 'We'll never catch them and we know where they're heading next. They'll be on their way to Termini station and walk to the museum from there.'

Becca's chest hurt with the effort of breathing so hard.

'So what do we do?'

'We go on the Vespa. We might even get to the museum before them. Are you OK to run or have you had enough?'

'I'll run,' she said and from somewhere she found a second wind, as they rushed back to where the Vespa was parked.

* * *

Becca was glad to be on the back of the scooter, hanging onto Sam, struggling to get her breath as he sped away, knowing they were getting closer to finding her dad and rescuing him from the clutches of that con woman.

They were going to make it and, when they did, she was going to tell her dad just what sort of person he'd got himself involved with.

Sam turned down a narrow street. 'I know a shortcut,' he shouted. 'Hold on!'

She tightened her arms around him and they were halfway along the street when a van reversed out of a side road right in their path.

Becca let out a cry as everything seemed to happen in slow motion.

Sam swerved, but the van loomed ahead and the scooter scuffed the side of it, then spun before toppling over and skidding sideways across the road.

There was nothing slow about Becca being wrenched from the back, losing her hold and rolling over and over.

For a few seconds she was dazed before she lifted her head slightly to see the scooter lying on its side and Sam a few feet away, motionless on the ground.

'Sam!' she cried. 'Sam!'

TO BE CONTINUED

Teresa Ashby, 2023

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Your stars

For 8-14 March with Bracha Goldsmith

yourastrologysigns.com

ARIES 21 Mar – 20 Apr
Strengthen your will and your resolve now. Don't allow fear to get in your way. You can do it!

TAURUS 21 Apr – 21 May
It's important to be alone and to reflect upon your life. Time is a precious commodity, use it wisely.

GEMINI 22 May – 21 Jun
Allow relationships to flow in and out of your life. As you change, you'll make other friends.

CANCER 22 Jun – 23 Jul
This is a great time for completing outstanding tasks. It might be repairs, renovations or simply tackling paperwork.

LEO 24 Jul – 23 Aug
Take more risks this week. Sometimes you play it very safe. Step outside that comfort zone and you'll find it exhilarating.

VIRGO 24 Aug – 23 Sep
Don't let anyone discourage you from following your dreams. Go on, pursue your passion – you have many wonderful talents to explore.

LIBRA 24 Sep – 23 Oct
Reach out and make new contacts. You're ready for fresh input that's stimulating mentally and emotionally.

SCORPIO 24 Oct – 22 Nov
Express your inner joy. You can be too serious and work-focused. Have fun and make room for a bit of recreation.

SAGITTARIUS 23 Nov – 21 Dec
This can be an exciting time filled with new opportunities. Don't close any doors and stay open to suggestions.

CAPRICORN 22 Dec – 20 Jan
The perspective you have on life is changing. Some of your relationships may not nourish you any more. It might be time to move on and create new connections.

AQUARIUS 21 Jan – 19 Feb
Happiness is associated with gratitude. You have much in your life to appreciate. Cultivating this habit could improve your finances.

PISCES 20 Feb – 20 Mar
Focus is your keyword this week. Don't put your energy into too many things. Choose one thing and complete it.

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ANSWERS TO 28 FEBRUARY PUZZLES

JUMBO PUZZLE Across: 1 Sachet **4** In concert **9** Singes **15** Intro **16** Divines **17** Salon **18** Orc **19** Marc **20** Molecular **21** Barack **24** Trading post **26** Foreboding **29** Regain **31** Strips **32** Right **33** Fit **35** Ornithology **36** Adam's apple **40** Coldstream **42** Represented **44** Art **45** Peach **47** Liquor **48** People **50** On the brain **52** Give and take **56** Kirsch **57** Desperado **59** Draw **62** *DCI* **63** Derby **64** Lie-down **65** Those **66** Lining **67** Dramatist **68** Papers

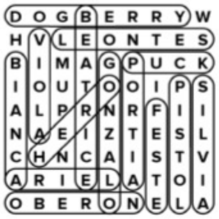
Down: 1 Stigma **2** Caterer **3** Egos **5** Naval **6** Of necessity **7** Costly **8** Reservoir **10** Innermost **11** Gnocchi **12** Suck **13** Adamant **14** Flabbergasted **22** Admitted **23** Agate **25** Pothole **27** Proof **28** Isla **30** Gunboat **33** Felt tip **34** South Ayrshire **37** Approve **38** Presents **39** Idler **41** Mold **42** Requirement **43** Talon **45** Pressed on **46** Hairdryer **49** Undoing **51** Tuition **53** Karaoke **54** Asylum **55** Owlets **58** Atoms **60** Idol **61** Etna
Answer: STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING

CROSSWORD Across: 7 Trout **8** Borrowing **10** School **11** District **12** Silently **13** Nose **15** Magnify **17** Traffic **20** Stir **22** Occasion **25** Accurate **26** Theory **27** Cathedral **28** Beams
Down: 1 Practical **2** European **3** Goodbye **4** Prisoner **5** Swarms **6** Enact **9** Plot **14** Kilograms **16** Forwards **18** Fastened **19** Someday **21** Taught **23** Cute **24** Scrap
Answer: INCANTATION

LINKWORDS
YELLOW, MARKER, TOWERS, BETTER, WONDER, BATTER, HANDED, MORTAL, TESTED, RUBBER
Answer: WATERMELON

WORDWISE
Akin, alike, ankle, anklet, inkiest, inkle, inks, intake, kale, kens, kiln, kilt, kilts, kinase, kist, kite, kites, kits, knelt, knit, knits, laik, lake, lank, lankest, lankiest, leak, leaks, like, liken, likens, likes, link, links, sake, saki, sank, silk, silken, sink, skat, skate, skean, skein, skin, skint, skit, slake, slink, snake, sneak, stake, stalk, stank, steak, stink, take, taken, takes, takin, talk, talkie, talks, tank, tanks, task, teak, tike, tinkle, tinkles
Answer: SAINTLIKE

WORDSEARCH



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Answer: Falstaff

MINI XWORD

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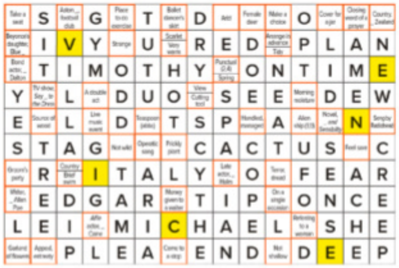
P	O	L	O
A	R	M	Y
M	E	S	S

Answer: Boas

ARROW WORD **Answer:** Venice



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L	E	I	[illegible]	M	I	C	H	A	E	L	[illegible]	S	H	E
[illegible]	[illegible]	P	L	E	A	[illegible]	E	N	D	[illegible]	D	E	E	P

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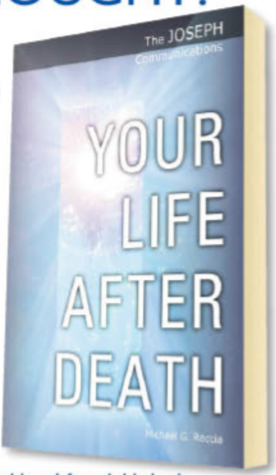

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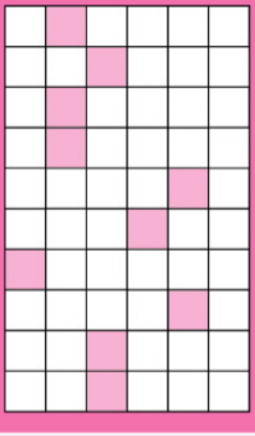
PUZZLE TIME

LINKWORDS

Fit 10 words into the grid so that each links with the end of the word on its left and the beginning of the one on the right. Then unscramble the letters in the shaded squares to make a word. **Clue: Bundle of pre-printed slips provided by a bank for means of payment.**



INDIAN	HOUSE
LAUNDRY	LUNCH
HOBSON'S	CUTS
SILLY	TICKET
LEGAL	LOIN
ACTION-	UP
AMEN	SHOP
WELSH	FRUIT
BOARD	DUCK
BUILDING	OUT

Wordwise

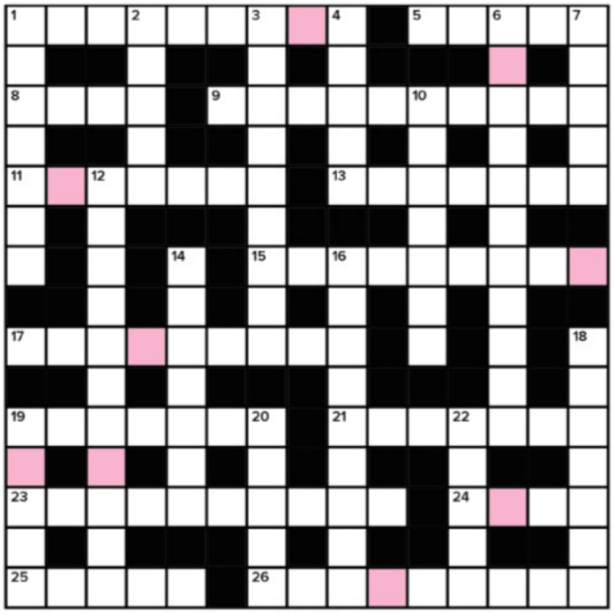
You have 15 minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters in the grid. Each word must contain four or more letters, one of which must be the central square. No proper nouns, plurals or foreign words are allowed. There is one nine-letter word in the grid, for which the clue is: **Variety.**

I	S	I
Y	V	R
E	T	D

Average = 15 More than 25 = well done

Crossword

Try the easy or cryptic clues and then rearrange the letters in the shaded squares for the answer.
Clue: Gregory oddly cuddling table in school class (9).



Easy clues

ACROSS

1 Declared (9)
5 Power (5)
8 Many (1,3)
9 Recognise (10)
11 Pensive person (7)
13 Opts (7)
15 Someone who works in an office (9)
17 Masks (9)
19 Restaurant worker (6,1)
21 Volunteered (7)
23 Disputed (10)
24 Track (4)
25 Severe (5)
26 Dealt (9)

DOWN

1 Adjusted (7)
2 Frequently (5)
3 Compares differences (9)
4 Horror (5)
6 Relative (11)
7 Changes in water level (5)
10 Come next (7)
12 Examine (11)
14 Unbiased (7)
16 Clientele (9)
18 Disordered (7)
19 Ridicules (5)
20 Ate a formal meal (5)
22 Consumed (5)

Cryptic clues

ACROSS

1 Lunged, penniless, after Ann made a statement (9)
5 Strength, maybe? (5)
8 Plenty seen regularly in sailboat (1,3)
9 Get below platform (10)
11 Writing fluid obtained by the essentially modernist philosopher (7)
13 Chooses December – the middle of it? (7)
15 Administrator's secret diary had first two parts extracted (9)
17 Covers of Big Issues ruined after B's replaced with D (9)
19 I dreamt about head waiter (6,1)
21 Promised to give off last of the wine (7)
23 One down to eat starters of lemon, lime and egg, being dared (10)
24 Follow story on the radio (4)
25 Snapper finally caught by nets, sent back to boat's rear (5)
26 Sid returned pens editor gave out (9)

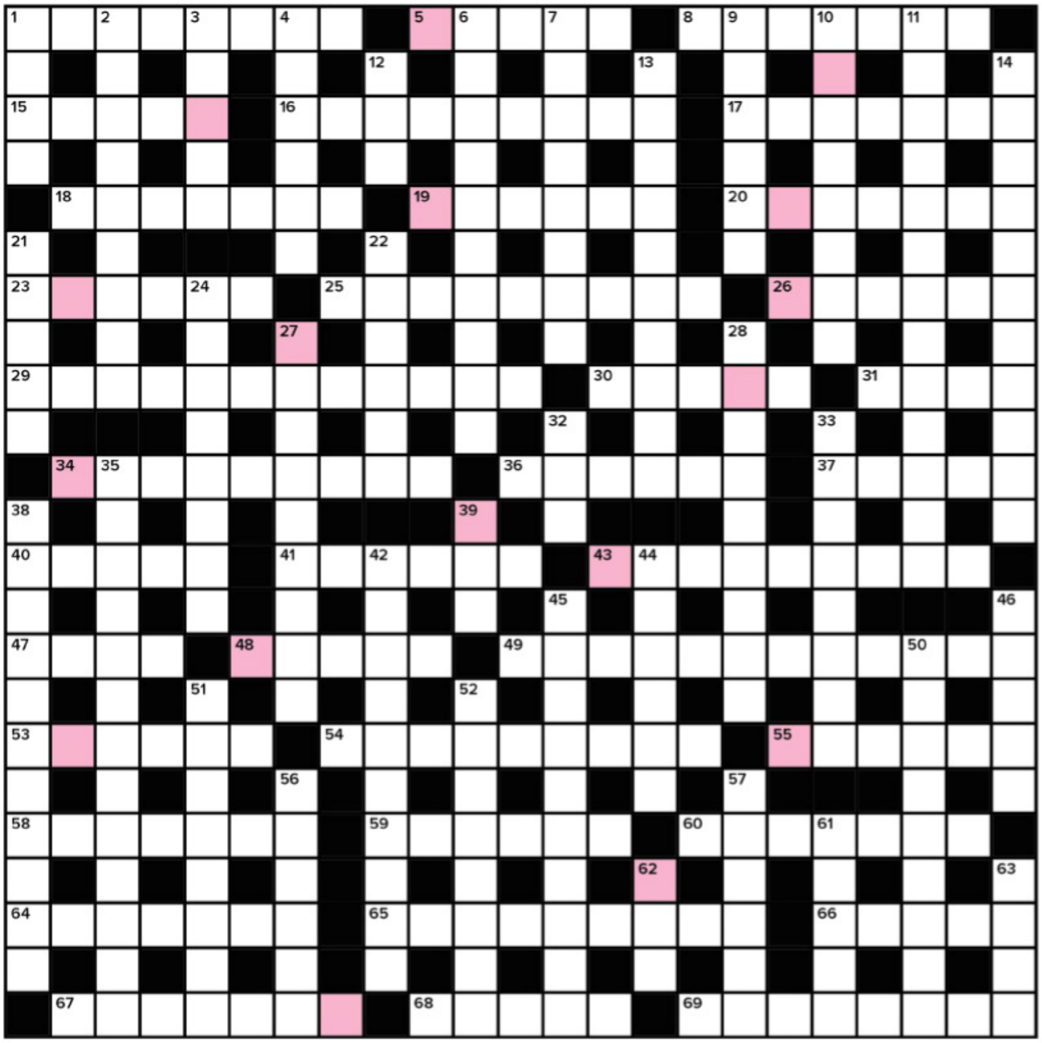
DOWN

1 Modified a diagram as per the exact data initially (7)
2 Frequently become milder once leader's gone (5)
3 Distinguishes peculiar cat's snort (9)
4 Father comes to grips with extremely remarkable fear (5)
6 At heart, one's hard graft unsettled older relative (11)
7 Radically edits Rise and Fall, perhaps? (5)
10 Pip, around University campus, clearly starts to do well (7)
12 Look into wearing vest before one entrance (11)
14 Real nut turned impartial (7)
16 Those arriving across top of Union Street are clients (9)
18 Was in front after dirt initially derailed and caused confusion (7)
19 Makes fun of dress, with the top at the bottom? (5)
20 Diana and Edward had a meal (5)
22 20 in college, we hear (5)

Just for fun!

Jumbo PUZZLE

Read down the letters in the shaded squares to spell out **a poet laureate (7,10).**



ACROSS

1 Least expensive (8)
5 Arm joint (5)
8 Structure carrying road (7)
15 Sum (5)
16 Gear (9)
17 Ordinal number (7)
18 Witness (7)
19 Person in charge (6)
20 Have an aversion to (7)
23 Works in oils (6)
25 Chimney opening (9)
26 Short while (6)
29 Feats (12)
30 Bereaved wife (5)
31 Farm building (4)
34 Logic (9)
36 Most broad (6)
37 Edible bulb (5)
40 Happen (5)
41 Method (6)
43 Shrieking (9)
47 Fruit (4)
48 Barriers (5)
49 Showed (12)
53 Bellowed (6)
54 Stone carvers (9)
55 Cooking guide (6)
58 Orator (7)
59 Units of length (6)
60 Comments (7)
64 Lacking (7)
65 Garden-centre suppliers (9)
66 Meat (5)
67 Draw out (7)
68 Oneness (5)
69 Confined (8)

DOWN

1 Adorable (4)
2 Set up (9)
3 Regular beat (5)
4 Shirt part (6)
6 Stands in for (10)
7 Evenly (8)
9 Within (6)
10 Partition (8)
11 Deliberation (13)
12 Owing (3)
13 Pleasing in appearance (10)
14 Menacing (11)
21 Javelin (5)
22 Bird type (6)
24 Cherish (8)
27 Weekday (9)
28 Compass direction (9)
32 Mouth part (3)
33 Buying and selling (8)
35 Incentive (13)
38 Likenesses (11)
39 Lair (3)
42 Choices (10)
44 Singing groups (6)
45 Agreement (10)
46 Verges (5)
50 Density (9)
51 Small folding blade (8)
52 Fundamental particle of matter (8)
56 Mournful (6)
57 Human being (6)
61 Nasty (5)
62 Pointed end (3)
63 Dull heavy sound (4)

YOU CAN WORK IT OUT...

+ The answers for 28 February are on the horoscopes page. The answers to this week's puzzles will appear in two issues' time.

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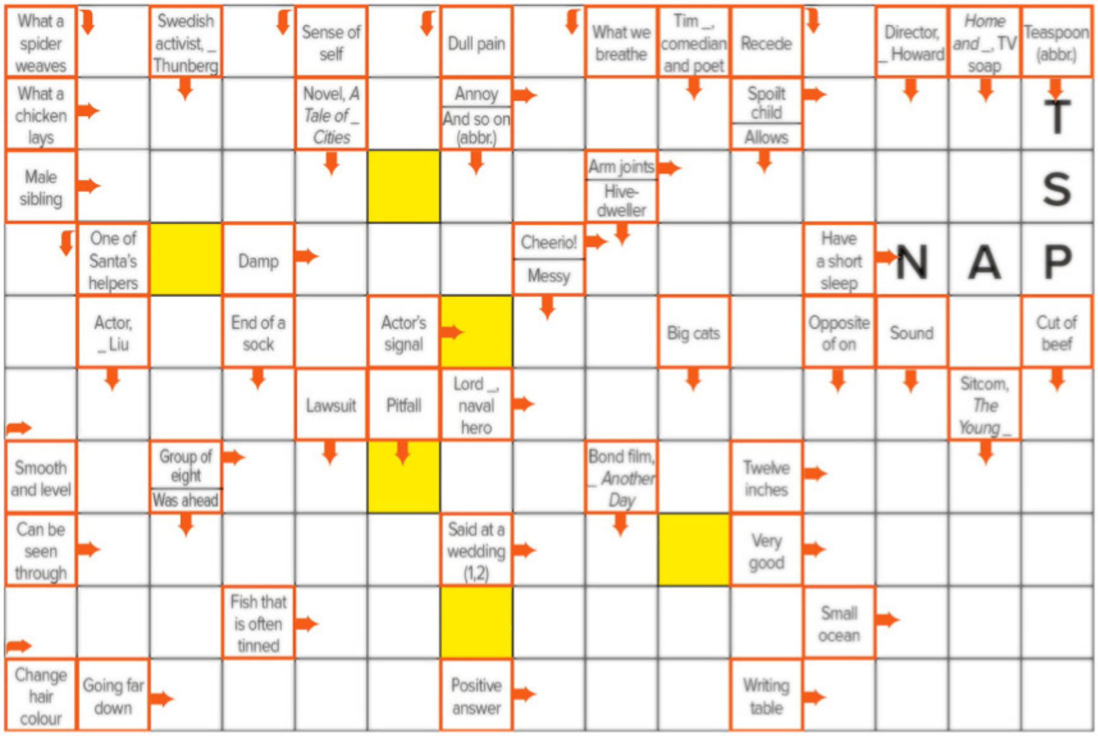
Recycle

PUZZLE *TIME*

Arrow word

A thundercloud that forms regularly over the Tiwi Islands in Australia during the rainy season is known by what name?
Solve the puzzle by following the arrows and writing in your answers. Then, read down the letters in the shaded squares to find the answer.


What a spider weaves
Swedish activist, _ Thunberg
Sense of self
Dull pain
What we breathe
Tim _, comedian and poet
Recede
Director, _ Howard
Home and _, TV soap
Teaspoon (abbr.)
What a chicken lays
Novel, *A Tale of _ Cities*
Annoy
And so on (abbr.)
Spoilt child
Allows
T
Male sibling
Arm joints
Hive-dweller
S
One of Santa's helpers
Damp
Cheerio!
Messy
Have a short sleep
N
A
P
Actor, _ Liu
End of a sock
Actor's signal
Big cats
Opposite of on
Sound
Cut of beef
Lawsuit
Pitfall
Lord _, naval hero
Sitcom, *The Young _*
Smooth and level
Group of eight
Was ahead
Bond film, *_ Another Day*
Twelve inches
Can be seen through
Said at a wedding (1,2)
Very good
Fish that is often tinned
Small ocean
Change hair colour
Going far down
Positive answer
Writing table

YOUR ANSWER:

WORDSEARCH

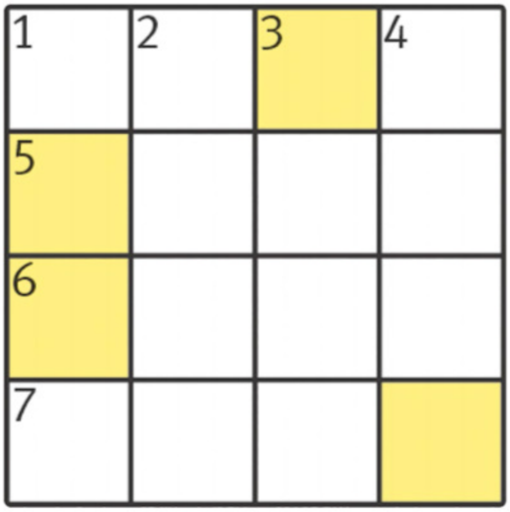
What type of insect has been used by the Onabasulu people of Papua New Guinea to make an instrument called a hugu?
The answer is the one missing from the grid.

M	E	C	Y	P	F	L	E	A
C	O	C	K	R	O	A	C	H
L	L	S	R	W	O	R	M	M
M	O	E	Q	I	J	Q	M	A
A	C	U	A	U	C	X	I	G
N	U	T	S	R	I	K	T	G
T	S	I	N	E	W	T	E	O
I	T	C	I	W	G	I	O	T
S	N	K	T	M	I	D	G	E

BEETLE
COCKROACH
CRICKET
EARWIG
FLEA
LOCUST
LOUSE
MAGGOT
MANTIS
MIDGE
MITE
MOSQUITO
NIT
TICK
WORM

YOUR ANSWER:

Mini crossword



The shaded boxes spell out a word.

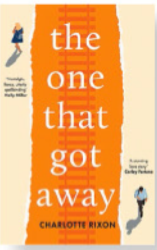
ACROSS
1 Employ for wages (4)
5 European river (4)
6 Have on as clothing (4)
7 Boys (4)

DOWN
1 Wolf-like cry (4)
2 Notion (4)
3 Peruse writing (4)
4 Makes mistakes (4)

Book club

Zoe West picks the best reads for you

The One That Got Away



by Charlotte Rixon (£16.99, HB, Aria)

When Benjamin meets Clara his world changes. He knows they are meant to be together, but the consequences of a devastating night means they lose contact for 20 years. Once Clara goes searching for Ben, knowing he may be in trouble, she wonders if what went wrong can be put right. Beware, this is a heartbreaking look at relationships – the messiness of it, the mistakes people make and the ripple effect that has. Powerful, with sensitive themes, this is a read that will stay with you.

Clytemnestra

by Costanza Casati (£16.99, HB, Penguin)

Woman's Weekly LOVES

Clytemenestra, whose very name has come to epitomise female wickedness, has found a worthy advocate in Costanza Casati and this fascinating Greek myth retelling. Far from being the cold-hearted killer of her husband Agamemnon, King of Mycenae and hero of the Trojan war, Clytemnestra was determined to avenge those whose lives he sacrificed in pursuit of glory, including that of his daughter Iphigenia. Casati brings the brutal, blood-soaked world of Greek mythology alive in this powerful passionate novel. Exhilarating.

COSTANZA CASATI
CLYTEMNESTRA
Mother. Monarch. Murderer. Magnificent.

The Lost Girls

KATE HAMER
HAPPILY EVER AFTER WAS JUST THE BEGINNING
THE LOST GIRLS

by Kate Hamer (£8.99, PB, Faber & Faber)

The nightmare may be over, but the scars remain… At just eight years old, Carmel was taken. Abducted by a deluded preacher, it was years before she could escape the cult that kidnapped her. Now safely at home with her mother Beth, the pair struggle to rebuild a normal life. For although Carmel was found, she is haunted by disturbing memories of another lost girl who was not so lucky. But will delving into the past plunge Carmel into danger again? At once deeply unsettling and profoundly hopeful, Kate Hamer's follow-up to *The Girl in the Red Coat* is a novel about loss, healing and redemption.

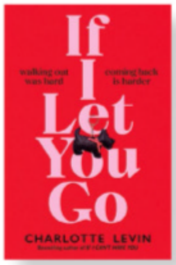
The Heroines

THE HEROINES
LAURA SHEPPERSON

by Laura Shepperson (£16.99, HB, Little, Brown Book Group)

In Ancient Athens, crowds eagerly await a scandalous trial. Phaedra, the neglected wife of King Theseus, has accused her stepson Hippolytus of rape. Branded an adulterer, the young bride's fate lies in the hands of the men of Athens, who must decide the truth. Who will they believe – the talented, promising prince or the Cretan woman from an unsavoury family? This feminist retelling of the Greek myth is an urgent, resonant and timely novel.

If I Let You Go



by Charlotte Levin (£14.99, HB, Pan Macmillan)

On the surface, cleaner Janet Brown lives a humdrum life with her husband Colin. But a tragedy 11 years earlier, and Colin's coercive behaviour, has made Janet a shell of her former self. Her actions during a disaster offer her the opportunity to make things right, and her life is propelled onto a new trajectory – but is her memory a false friend? A moving portrait of a coercive marriage that will have you gripped to see if Janet will break free.

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Rosemary

My latest SQUEEZE

No, not a new chap – it's an accordion

I might have mentioned once or twice before on this page that Mr Dear is a man who cannot resist a passing fad. What an irritating little boy he must have been.

'You never seem to play with your Meccano any more, young Thomas. That scale model of the Forth Bridge is still cluttering up the spare room.'

'Oh, I haven't time for that now, Mother. All my time is taken up with making Chartres Cathedral. Oh, but wait a minute… here comes my friend Jenkins Minor, and he's carrying a box of Scalextric.'

So, you can imagine how my heart sank when, a few years ago, he spotted an accordion at a car-boot sale.

'Still in good working order,' said the stallholder. 'Why don't you strap it on and give it a go?'

Mr D did just that.

I am no musician, but playing the accordion is clearly more difficult than it looks. Mr D plays the piano to what you might call 'pub standard'. That is, he's probably at his best in a noisy bar where the audience is not entirely sober. His playing is lively rather than accurate.

The thing about playing the piano is that you have a good aerial view of the keyboard. You're not actually supposed to look, as I understand it, you're to keep your eyes on the music. But if you wish to take the occasional glance at the keys, nobody will be any the wiser.

With an accordion, you can't really see the keyboard. And you certainly can't see what I shall refer to as the oompah notes – the little round buttons – on the left-hand side. You really have to feel your way to a tune.

> 'As Mr D played, people started to put money in the box'

'Mm,' grunted Mr D when he discovered this.

'Only £50, mate,' said the stallholder. 'They can fetch double that on eBay.'

'Really?' said Mr D, sounding sceptical.

'You won't regret it,' said the man, fetching the box and pocketing the money.

The accordion sat unused in our spare room until lockdown, when it became Mr D's COVID project.

Don't get me wrong. I am all in favour of learning new things, but not every innovation is a blessing. If there is anything worse than a mild dose of the virus, it is listening to *The Sailor's Hornpipe* pretty much every day for two years.

I mention all this because we recently took delivery of an accordion in our charity shop. It came as a package, along with two recorders, a banjo and a tambourine. If I were to hazard a guess, an amateur musician was taking a week's holiday somewhere and their partner had taken advantage. 'Yes, isn't it odd that the burglar only seemed interested in the musical instruments? And it's such a shame that the insurance ran out only last Tuesday.'

'It looks in quite good nick,' said my colleague Wendy, 'but does it play?'

She picked it up, strapped it on, moved the bellows in and out and made a noise like a carthorse having an asthma attack. The accordion made the noise, obviously, not Wendy.

'How much should we charge? Is it in working order? Do you know anything about accordions?'

'No,' I said. 'But I know a man who does.'

It was the work of a moment to call out Thomas Dear, Accordion Investigator, who was on the spot in 20 minutes. 'Sorry I'm late, love,' he said, 'but I was putting some WD-40 on my crankset.'

Everybody has to have a hobby, I suppose.

We handed over the accordion with due ceremony. He strapped himself in and started to play the theme from *Captain Pugwash*.

He'd barely finished the first few notes when Mrs Beasley, our manager, shot out from the storeroom. 'Far too loud,' she said. 'You'll drive away the customers.'

'Don't mind me,' said our only customer.

'I can take it outside,' said Mr D.

He departed, box and all, and began playing in front of the shop. He gave us the Italian national anthem – which sounds very jaunty on the accordion and is apparently quite easy in parts – then *The Sailor's Hornpipe*, followed by the *Blue Peter* theme tune.

As Mr D played, people started to put money in the box.

'I've got two pieces of good news,' he said when he returned. 'The first is, it's a jolly good accordion.'

'And the second?'

'I've made £7.40,' he said with a smile.

Rosie x

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- 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners PLUS Free selected drinks from 6pm to midnight every night
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- 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners PLUS Free selected drinks from 6pm to midnight every night
- 3 nights' standard en-suite chalet (upgrades available) & parking

Free Drinks
Cliff

BIG 60s & 70s Half Way to Christmas Festival - Warner Gunton Hall, nr Lowestoft

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£10pp deposit

Date: 14 July 2023 - self drive to resort

INCLUDED:

- Entertainment every night with The Legendaries - Les McKeown's touring band perform Bay City Rollers hits, Jimmy Jemain as Cliff Richard, Phil Wright's Paper Lace, Carnaby Street, Paul Da Vinci's 60s & 70s Explosion, Sounds Imperial, Little Miss 60s, tributes to George Benson & Dusty Springfield
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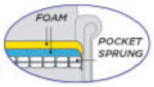
FOAM
POCKET SPRUNG

RISE & RECLINE CHAIRS

CHOICE OF BACK HEIGHT
CHOICE OF SEAT HEIGHT
CHOICE OF SEAT DEPTH
CHOICE OF SEAT WIDTH

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NEW ELECTRIC SOFA BED

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ADJUSTABLE BEDS

CHOICE OF HEIGHT
CHOICE OF LENGTH
CHOICE OF WIDTH

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THE 1ST ITEM

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BHTA British Healthcare Trades Association

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